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ABSTRACT

This handbook offers guidelines for the successful transition of students with disabilities into adult life and is designed to be used by everyone on the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, including the student and family members. The first chapter provides an overview of the transition assessment process, including purpose and the laws requiring a transition assessment. Chapter 2 looks at transition assessment and career development. It provides a checklist and assessment questions to help teachers identify where along the career path of awareness, exploration, preparation, and assimilation a student is functioning. Chapter 3 focuses on integrating the results of transition assessment into the IEP. Sample case studies and transition goals and objectives are provided. Chapter 4 considers the role of the student in the transition assessment process and the development of self-determination skills. Chapter 5 discusses the role of family members, special education and general education teachers, support staff, and adult services providers in the transition process. Chapter 6 suggests methods to collect information on the student's strengths, needs, interests, and preferences. The final chapter offers a format for making the best match between the demands of future environments and the individual student. Appendices offer a list of commercially available measures and sample community, job, vocational, and program assessment forms. (DB)

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ASSESS *for* Success

Handbook on Transition Assessment

Patricia L. Sitlington
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Wynne Begun
Richard C. Lombard
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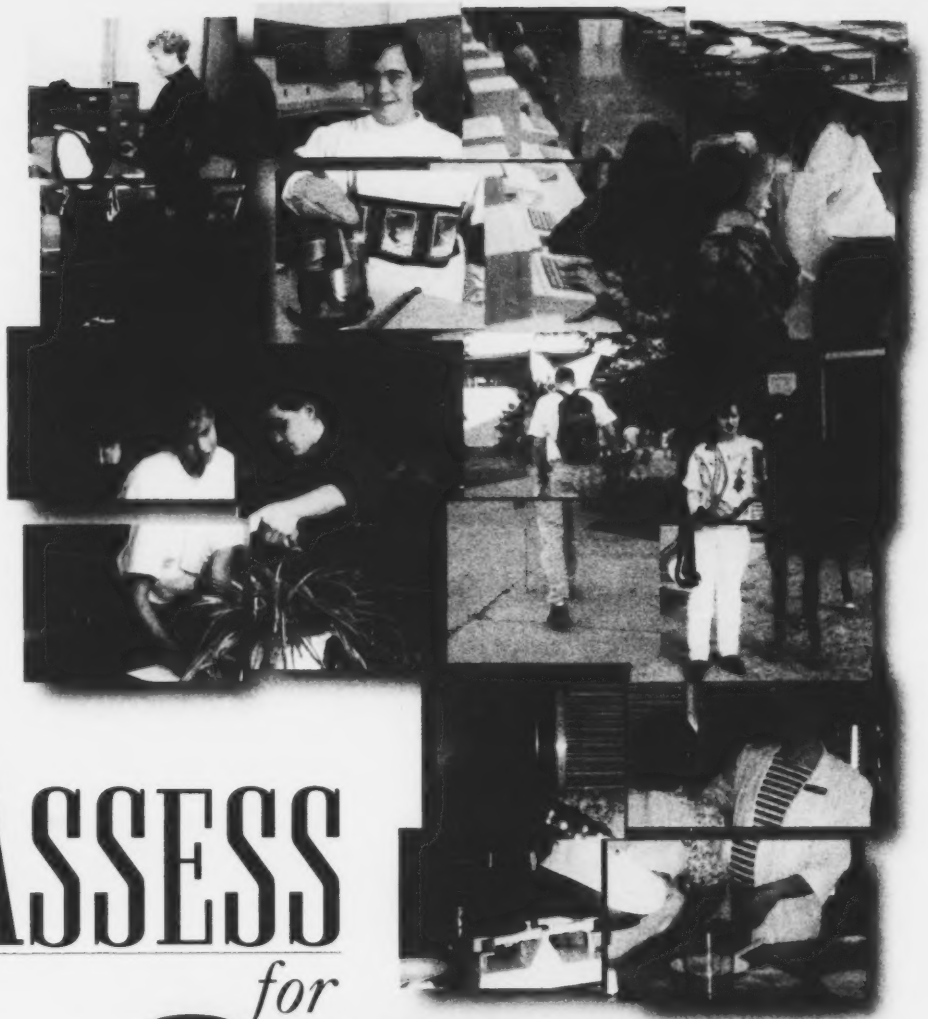

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Contents

Preface v

1. Overview of Transition Assessment 1

What Does Transition Mean?
What Is the Purpose of Transition Assessment?
Assessment for Transition—It's the Law
Summary
References

2. Career Development as a Context for Transition Assessment 11

What Is Career Development?
What Are the Career Development Phases?
Assessment Questions for Career Development Phases
Summary
References
Additional Resources

3. Using Outcomes of Assessment for IEP Planning 27

Integrating Transition Assessment into the IEP
Case Studies
Sample Transition Goals and Short-Term Objectives
References
Additional Resources

4. The Role of Self-Determination in the Transition Assessment Process 47

Self-Determination, Transition Assessment, and Goal Setting
Student Involvement on the Assessment Team
Assessing and Developing Self-Determination Skills
Summary
References
Additional Resources

5. Roles of Key Players 61

Who Should Participate and What Information Can They Provide?
Summary
Additional Resources

6. Methods of Gathering Information 75

Methods of Gathering Information on the Individual
Methods of Assessing Potential Environments
Summary
References
Additional Resources

7. Making the Match 97

Overview of the Transition Assessment Process
Questions That Need to Be Asked
Putting It All Together—Developing an Assessment Plan
Summary

Appendices 113

A. Commercially Available Tests/Assessment Procedures
B. Sample Community Assessment Form
C. Sample Job Analysis Form
D. Sample Vocational Training Analysis Form
E. Sample Program Inventory

Preface

Preparing for transition into all aspects of adult life is like taking a long trip. To proceed effectively it helps to have an itinerary, a timetable, and a map. As with any trip, it is important to make frequent progress checks to be sure you are still on the right road and are moving along at the speed you anticipated. Also, frequent progress checks allow for orderly course corrections, side trips, and changes in destination. Transition assessment is an individualized, ongoing process that helps students with disabilities and their families define appropriate personal destinations or goals and check progress along the way.

The vision for life beyond school should begin to be conceived in the elementary and middle school years. By age 14 the individualized education program should reflect a clear timetable and itinerary for accomplishing specific goals. Assessment is crucial in establishing this timetable and in keeping the IEP team on track. However, deciding what to assess and how assessment data will be collected and used can be a challenge.

This handbook is designed to be used by everyone on the IEP team, including the student and family members, as they assist a student of any disability and functioning level in defining his or her vision of the future and in reaching this vision. The assessment process described in this handbook builds upon a variety of information emphasizing the use of transition assessment techniques and community-based settings in gathering the information needed for transition planning.

The handbook was developed by CEC's Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT). The first chapter provides an overview of the transition assessment process, including its purpose and the laws requiring that transition assessment be carried out. Chapter 2 approaches transition assessment within the context of career development and provides an easy-to-use checklist and set of assessment questions to help teachers pinpoint where along the awareness, exploration, preparation, and assimilation career path a student is functioning.

The focus of Chapter 3 is on integrating the results of transition assessment into the IEP. Sample case studies and transition goals and short-term objectives are provided. Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the roles of key players in the transition assessment process. Chapter 4 presents the role of the student in the transition assessment process and the development of self-determination skills to assist the student in this role. Chapter 5 discusses the role of family members, special education and general education teachers, support staff, and adult services providers in the assessment process.

Chapter 6 presents an overview of methods that practitioners can use to collect information on the student's strengths, needs, interests, and preferences throughout the transition planning process. This chapter also presents methods of gathering information on the demands of potential future living, working, and educational environments. The final chapter presents a format for making the best match between the demands of these future environments and the strengths, needs, interests, and preferences of the student. This chapter presents questions that need to be asked during the transition process and a procedures for developing an assessment plan.

Transition assessment is not a magical process. It is simply assisting students in identifying where they would like to live, work, and learn when they become adults and in determining the supports, accommodations, and preparation they will need in order to reach their goals. We hope that this handbook will help you as you assist students in this process.

1

Overview of Transition Assessment

Transition assessment is an individualized, ongoing process that helps students with disabilities and their families define goals to be included in their individualized education programs (IEPs) as they prepare for adult roles. Adult roles can include employment, postsecondary education or training programs, independent living, community involvement, and social/personal relationships. Valid assessment data serve as the common thread in the transition process and form the basis for planning and placement decisions regarding adult roles. The purpose of this chapter is to

- Tell what transition and transition assessment mean.
- Tell why transition assessment must be done.

Adolescents with disabilities and their families face challenges at critical transition points in their lives, such as moving from a middle school to a high school setting, moving from a high school to an employment setting, entering a postsecondary education program, and/or deciding to live independently in the community. Each of these transition points requires a determination of appropriate experiences, services, and programs that will assist individuals in selecting and achieving goals. Due to the diversity of these goals, various professionals, including special educators, vocational educators, counselors, vocational evaluators, work-study coordinators, support personnel, employers, and community/adult service providers, may participate in the transition assessment process. However, the success of this process depends on the active involvement of individuals with disabilities and their families.

Practitioners, students with disabilities, and their families need to understand what types of assessment data are most useful at different life junctures, who is in the best position to collect the assessment data, and how the results of the assessments will ultimately be used in the transition planning process. Students with disabilities must be encouraged to

assume a greater role in their assessment process. For example, students with mild disabilities can be involved in determining what assessment activities they will participate in and how they can use these activities to identify their strengths and preferences as they prepare for adult roles. Students with moderate and severe disabilities, along with their families, can be involved in planning vocational, community, and domestic experiences that will help identify preferences, strengths, and accommodations needed in various environments.

Practitioners, students with disabilities, and their families need to understand the career development process in order to determine what is developmentally appropriate in terms of assessment practices and realistic postsecondary outcomes during the transition process. A review of the career development process is included in Chapter 2, and the roles of various individuals involved in the transition assessment process are described in Chapter 5.

WHAT DOES TRANSITION MEAN?

Since the early 1980s, special education has focused increased attention on the need for transition processes to facilitate better postsecondary outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Documentation of poor postsecondary outcomes for individuals with disabilities through follow-up and follow-along studies has led to development of secondary and postsecondary transition models, identification of "best practices" to include in these models, and training of personnel to provide transition-related services across a continuum of secondary and postsecondary programs. As a result, legislative mandates and secondary special education have evolved rapidly in the past 10 years. Will's (1984) definition of transition, which focused on moving "from school to employment," has been broadened considerably to include diverse outcomes related to employment, postsecondary education and vocational education programs, independent living, community involvement, and social/personal relationships. For the purposes of this handbook, the term *transition* is defined as follows:

> Transition refers to a change in status from behaving primarily as a student to assuming emergent roles in the community. *These roles include employment, participating in postsecondary education, maintaining a home, becoming actively involved in the community and experiencing satisfactory personal and social relationships.* The process of enhancing transition involves the participation and coordination of school programs, adult agency services and natural supports within the community. The foundation for transition should be laid during the elementary and middle school years, guided by the broad concept of career development. Transition planning should begin no later than age 14, and students should be encouraged, to the full extent of their capabilities, to assume a maximum amount of responsibility for such planning. (Halpern, 1994, p. 117)

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF TRANSITION ASSESSMENT?

The literature pertaining to transition models and effective transition practices reveals that assessment should provide the foundation for the transition process. For the purposes of this handbook, assessment is conceptualized broadly as an ongoing process that draws from many methods and practices in career education, vocational evaluation, vocational education, rehabilitation, and curriculum-based assessment. Assessment methods should be varied depending on the purposes of the assessment, where the individual is in the career development process, the individual's characteristics, and the individual's postsecondary goals.

Methods for assessing individuals and environments are described in detail in Chapter 6, and a framework for determining appropriate matches between individuals and environments is presented in Chapter 7.

While the purposes of transition assessment vary depending on the individual and the setting, the broad purposes include the following:

1. To determine individuals' levels of career development when planning transition assessment activities.
2. To assist individuals with disabilities to identify their interests, preferences, strengths, and abilities in relation to postsecondary goals, including employment opportunities, postsecondary education and training opportunities, independent living situations, community involvement, and personal/social goals.
3. To determine appropriate placements within educational, vocational, and community settings that facilitate the attainment of these postsecondary goals.
4. To determine and facilitate students' self-determination skills.
5. To determine the accommodations, supports, and services individuals with disabilities will need to attain and maintain their postsecondary goals related to employment, postsecondary education/training programs, independent living, community involvement, and social/personal roles/relationships.

ASSESSMENT FOR TRANSITION—IT'S THE LAW

Since the early 1980s, legislative mandates in the fields of special education, vocational-technical education, job training, and rehabilitation have addressed the need for transition goals, services, and activities to facilitate movement from secondary to postsecondary settings. These mandates and initiatives have provided funds for research, personnel training and model demonstration programs in secondary special education, transition programming, and supported employment. While the mandates also called for interdisciplinary efforts to coordinate services, actual practices concerning the transition process have varied widely since they were left to the discretion of state and local agencies.

Legislation in the 1990s has moved toward more specific language regarding the inclusion of transition goals in students' programs and in designating personnel responsible for the transition process. This language is most evident in Public Law 101-476, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA) for students with disabilities and in Public Law 103-239, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 (STOWA) for all students. Language from each of these Acts and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 concerning transition and assessment is reviewed briefly in the following sections. Language concerning assessment and transition from the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Amendments of 1992 and Public Law 101-342, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Amendments of 1990 (Perkins Act) is summarized in Table 1-1.

At the time of this writing, several new bills have been introduced to Congress. While these bills may change the scope of some of the mandates reviewed in this section, it is important to understand previous legislation and assessment practices that have helped students with disabilities gain access to a variety of programs.

Amendments to IDEA (The Individual Education Act Amendments of 1995) were introduced during the summer and fall of 1995. These amendments would restructure the federal education programs for students with disabilities. Changes to the IEP have been introduced that call for more parental involvement, earlier transition planning, and fewer standard evaluations once an individual has been determined eligible for special education services.

Significant changes will also take place in vocational training legislation and the structure of most vocational programs. In fall 1995, the Senate passed the Workforce Development Act and the House of Representatives passed the Careers Bill. These bills are likely to go to conference and may repeal certain Acts, including the Perkins Act Amendments of 1990 and the JTPA Amendments of 1992. Vocational training service delivery systems will be largely decided upon by state and local entities. Vocational education programs will most likely remain a part of the restructured training systems. These bills, like the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, continue to emphasize the need for access to programs by all students, including those with disabilities. Therefore, it is important that special educators understand how to collect assessment data that will support access to vocational options and better postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990

IDEA mandated for the first time that the IEPs of all students with disabilities include transition-related services and goals by the time those students have reached age 16. The following language is taken directly from the final regulations regarding the implementation of IDEA:

TABLE 1-1
Legislation

Law	*Language Concerning Assessment/Transition*	*Possible Assessment Activites*
IDEA (P.L. 101-476) Transition Requirements	A coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, that promotes movement from school to postschool activities including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.	• Various career exploration activities • Student/family interviews to identify goals • Situational assessments in variety of environments • Interest inventories
IDEA Assessment Requirements	Activities must be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and include • Instruction. • Community experiences. • Development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives. • Acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.	• Interest inventories • Situational assessment in paid/unpaid job sites • Situational assessment in community sites • Functional academics assessment • Behavior observation • Student/parent interviewing
Perkins Act (P.L. 101-342) Transition and Assessment Requirements	1. Assist students who are members of special populations to enter vocational education programs, and with respect to students with disabilities, assist in fulfilling the transition requirement of Section 626 of the IDEA. 2. Assess the special needs of students participating in programs with respect to their successful completion of the vocational education program in the most integrated setting possible.	• Interest inventories • Record review • Situational assessment in vocational technical courses • Exploratory rotation in vocational technical courses • Work samples
Rehabilitation Amendments of 1992	• Existing assessment data that can be provided by the individual with disability, the family, an advocate, or an educational agency can be used to determine eligibility. • Definition for transition services duplicates IDEA.	• Background review • Summary of paid and nonpaid vocational experiences (skills, interest, needs, accommodations) • Interviews • Portfolios • Vocational evaluation reports • Vocational profiles
JTPA Amendments of 1992	Assessment of basic skills and supportive services needs of each participant, which may include a review of occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, and aptitudes. However, a new assessment is not required if personnel determine it is appropriate to use a recent assessment conducted in another education or training program as long as the information is current and relevant to the individual's career goals (e.g., a regular high school academic program).	• Background review • Summary of paid and nonpaid vocational experiences (skills, interest, needs, accommodations) • Interviews • Portfolios • Vocational evaluation reports • Vocational profiles

> The IEP for each student, beginning no later than age 16 (and at a younger age, if determined appropriate), must include a statement of needed transition services as defined in 300.18, including, if appropriate, a statement of each public agency's responsibilities or linkages, or both, before the student leaves the school setting. If the IEP team determines that services are not needed in one or more of the areas specified in 300.18(b)(2)(i) through (b)(2)(iii), the IEP must include a statement to that effect and the basis upon which the determination was made. (300.346)

In addition, the definition of transition was broadened from Will's original (1984) definition to include

> A coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability, designed within an outcome-oriented process, that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. (300.18)

In terms of transition assessment, it is important to note that

> Activities must be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and include:
>
> - Instruction
> - Community experience
> - Development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives
> - Acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation

IDEA also made it clear that secondary special educators are responsible for inviting students and their families to their IEP meetings when transition goals are discussed and for inviting personnel from other agencies to ensure that transition services are coordinated. Thus, IDEA reinforces self-determination and choice for students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible.

> If a purpose of the meeting is the consideration of transition services for a student, the public agency shall invite:
>
> - the student
> - a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.
>
> If the student does not attend, the public agency shall take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered; and
>
> If an agency invited to send a representative to a meeting does not do so, the public agency shall take other steps to obtain the participation of the other agency in the planning of any transition services.

A final point from IDEA concerns the need for secondary personnel to identify other agencies that can provide services to individuals with disabilities as they make the transition from school into the community. In terms of transition assessment, this means that special educators must first understand the individual student's needs concerning postsecondary goals and then work with the student and family to identify the range of services different agencies and community groups can provide to meet these goals. It also means that individuals with disabilities and their families must be aware of eligibility requirements of adult service and community programs and must be prepared to advocate for their inclusion in appropriate adult services.

School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994

President Clinton signed STOWA in May 1994. This landmark legislation has important implications for all adolescents in terms of developing a more effective transition process, and it serves as a foundation for educational reform in many U. S. schools. It is important that special educators and related service personnel be aware of this legislation and advocate for students with disabilities to be included in the school-to-work programs currently being developed or reconceptualized for all students. Some of the language in this law specifically addresses the need for assessment and transition activities that are already included in many secondary special education programs, such as identifying students' interests, conducting ongoing assessment in the workplace, renewing emphasis on career education activities, and identifying postschool linkages with other agencies as students leave the school system.

The broad purpose of STOWA is to reform educational and vocational programs. In addition, this law is intended to expose *all* students to a broad array of career opportunities and to facilitate the selection of career majors based on individual interests, strengths, and goals. Another key purpose is to increase opportunities for minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities by enabling these individuals to prepare for careers in fields where traditionally they have been underrepresented.

While there will be no final regulations to implement this law, some states are receiving implementation grants to develop comprehensive school-to-work systems for all students. Under Title II of this law, states must describe how their school-to-work system will coordinate with or integrate existing local school-to-work programs with funds from the Perkins Act Amendments of 1990, the Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994, the National Skills Standard Act of 1994, IDEA, JTPA, and the Rehabilitation Act.

The three components to be included in school-to-work programs are school-based learning, work-based learning, and connecting activities. Each component includes language concerning assessment and transition activities.

School-Based Learning Component. School-based learning activities target career awareness and career exploration and counseling to help students identify, select, or reconsider their interests, goals, and career majors, including those options that may not be traditional for their gender, race, or ethnicity. These activities should begin as early as possible, but not later than the 7th grade. Interested students should make an initial selection of a career major not later than the beginning of the 11th grade.

Students and school dropouts need to be provided with regularly scheduled evaluations involving ongoing consultation and problem solving to identify strengths and weaknesses, academic progress, workplace knowledge, goals, and the need for additional learning opportunities to master core academic and vocational skills.

Procedures should be in place to facilitate the entry of students participating in a STOWA program into additional training or postsecondary education programs, as well as to facilitate the transfer of students between education and training programs.

Work-Based Learning Component. This component includes activities such as job shadowing, on-the-job training, and work experience. Many of these activities may already be in place in school systems and can be revised or expanded to meet the mandates in this law. Assessment should include ongoing monitoring while the student is involved in work activities. This can include direct observation of skills, interests, and work behaviors. For some students with moderate and severe disabilities, work-based learning provides an opportunity for continued career exploration and for the identification of needed supports and accommodations.

Connecting Activities. Connecting activities include matching students with employers to promote work-based learning opportunities and linking students with other community services that may be necessary to ensure a successful transition from school to work. Other connecting activities may include

- Providing training to work-based and school-based staff on new curricula, student assessments, student guidance, and feedback to the school regarding student performance.
- Providing career exploration and awareness services, counseling and mentoring services, college awareness and preparation services, and other services to prepare students for the transition from school to work.

Many school-to-work programs will include existing vocational programs such as "tech prep," apprenticeship programs, on-the-job training, and academic skill development in the workplace. These programs can be included in students' IEPs as related transition activities and contribute to more effective postsecondary outcomes. Most important, assessment should form the basis for identifying placements, planning support services, and updating transition goals for all students participating in this new initiative.

Rehabilitation Amendments of 1992

Assessment forms the basis for determining eligibility for rehabilitation programs and in planning individual written rehabilitation plans (IWRPs), which outline services and goals for the individual during the rehabilitation process. The Rehabilitation Amendments of 1992 contain important language concerning transition services and alternate forms of assessment to be used in the eligibility determination process. First, existing assessment data, which can be provided by the individual with a disability, the family, an advocate, or an educational agency, can now be used for determining eligibility. A comprehensive assessment may be undertaken if additional information is needed. The statute, however, limits the extent of any comprehensive assessment to specific information needed to develop a program of services. Individual choice is also emphasized in these amendments: The IWRP must be jointly developed between the counselor and the individual with a disability. Finally, the definition for transition services duplicates the definition in the IDEA. Hopefully, this can assist educators and rehabilitation counselors in the collaboration process. Educators and individuals with disabilities need to realize that the rehabilitation system serves only 8% of the 43 million people with disabilities in the United States, so it is important to be aware of and understand what other service systems can offer in terms of postsecondary services (F. Schroeder, personal communication, January, 1995).

SUMMARY

Deciding what to assess and how assessment data will be collected and used in the IEP and transition planning process is critical in determining appropriate postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities. While there are a variety of methods, models, and processes associated with assessment, it is important for practitioners to determine what assessment data are needed at each transition point for each student and family. Most important, students need to participate in assessment—from choosing activities to understanding how the assessment data can be used to determine their strengths, needs, and preferences in the transition process. Finally, all personnel involved in the transition process need to understand how to collect and use assessment data for transition planning.

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2

Career Development as a Context for Transition Assessment

This chapter provides a brief review of the concept and phases of career development as contexts for appropriate assessment. The chapter goals are to

- Describe the phases of career development.
- Help you recognize where students are in their personal career development process.
- Identify appropriate assessment questions for each career development phase.

As transition services continue to grow and the focus of assessment necessarily broadens, it becomes clear that transition assessment should be conducted within a career development context. As students leave high school they are expected to assume new roles, all of which are included under the career development umbrella. These roles involve postsecondary education, employment, maintaining a home, participation in the community, and personal and social relationships (Halpern, 1994). Each role is intrinsically linked to the others, and each plays a part in students' overall career development.

Assessment can address these diverse but interdependent roles to facilitate transition planning. Regardless of the severity of students' disabilities, visions of themselves in these adult roles can crystallize through assessment activities. Assessment identifies students' career interests, abilities, special needs, dreams, and goals, as well as their personal or social support networks, preferred leisure activities, levels of community involvement, access to transportation options, and status of family and living situations. Information from these areas can be used to develop short- and long-term goals and, when synthesized, can identify where students are in their personal career development phases. Assessment helps students,

educators, and families follow each student's progress through career development phases.

Often students are asked to participate in career or vocational assessment processes before they are chronologically, emotionally, or even physically mature enough to make career-related decisions. Many educators advocate beginning assessment relevant to career decision making, vocational development, and subsequent *transition planning* as early as possible (Clark & Kolstoe, 1995; Halpern, 1994; Levinson, 1993). Indeed, this planning *should* begin early, but often we conduct assessment based on our notions of where students "should be" in the developmental process, instead of where they are. Expecting students to make career decisions without sufficient opportunity to experience each career development stage can be compared with asking them to take an algebra examination even though they have not yet learned addition and subtraction. An illustration follows.

> A 16-year-old student with severe auditory receptive learning disabilities is asked to identify career interests and make educational program decisions and vocational choices leading to adult employment. Chronologically and physically, we assume that she has a broad awareness of the wide variety of careers available and we presume she has explored some career areas or specific jobs. But she cannot make realistic choices, because she has devoted her school time to acquiring academic skills and has no knowledge of careers, work demands, or how her skills and interests compare with them. She expresses interest in working as a telephone sales representative, a 911 dispatcher, or a crisis counselor on a suicide prevention hotline, because she loves to talk on the phone. She decides to enroll in the cooperative work experience program her senior year, which will require working half days. After graduation she plans to enroll in college as a psychology major.

There are many problems with this student's plans, the first of which involves the possible incompatibility between her learning disability and job choices. In addition, although working half days during senior year in the cooperative work experience program will provide her with information on her interests and work demands, she may be missing coursework that will be needed for her preferred occupational choices. Assessment of her interests, abilities, and academic achievement by work sampling, interviewing, situational assessment, job shadowing, and job try-outs helps her understand her strengths and needs, the demands and nature of work, and the compatibility of her abilities with work demands.

Typically students flounder and are unable to make wise career decisions because they are unaware of educational, vocational training, and career and employment options, and they do not know enough about themselves, particularly in relation to career options and work demands. Also, adolescents with disabilities often mature more slowly than others. Because these students must focus so much energy on their academic struggles, they have little time for career exploration or work experience. Without sufficient exposure to work or experiencing it themselves, students have trouble picturing themselves in realistic vocational, career, or work situations.

Career education means learning about work and occupations to develop an individual identity in relation to careers. It also means relating work to other life roles, such as living independently and enjoying social relationships and activities. Levinson (1993) described career education as school programming designed to help students "make realistic and informed choices" (p. 338), and in order to do that, they must be knowledgeable about their interests, abilities, values, and needs. In other words, they must possess self-knowledge and have knowledge of occupational options, requirements, demands, and rewards. Career education also addresses the social and interpersonal skills, work habits, and attitudes toward work that students need if they are to make appropriate adjustments to work and community life (Levinson, 1993).

The first step in any assessment process is to obtain a baseline understanding of where students are in their career development processes (e.g., their understanding of current and potential career and life roles) so that appropriate questions may be asked and assessment strategies can produce useful results. Assessment within a career development context helps students begin to understand the interdependent relationships among their adult roles; thus, they can refocus assessment, career education, and transition planning in these areas.

Reviews of assessment methods used in transition programs (Linn & DeStefano, 1986) have indicated that we ask students with disabilities to make decisions that are too specific and advanced for their levels of development. In addition, these reviews have demonstrated that we focus assessment for transition primarily on the work roles of adulthood and ignore others.

As noted in Chapter 1, assessment, planning, and programming for transition are becoming the infrastructure for educational reform and service delivery. As an example, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 (STOWA) mandates that preparation for adult roles form the rationale for educational planning for all students. When school-to-work transitions are based within the broad context of life-long career development, we can help students develop long-term solutions to problems that may persist throughout their lifetimes.

WHAT IS CAREER DEVELOPMENT?

"Career development is the process through which people come to understand themselves as they relate to the world of work and their role in it" (National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, 1992, p. 3). Of course, we facilitate this process by including other aspects of life within the career development context. If we are not inclusive, family, social, and community influences may interfere with natural progress through career development and expansion processes. Every person's career development process is intensely personal and unique.

Career development is commonly considered part of the natural human growth and development process. When defining career education, Marland referred to a "stream of continued growth and progress" (cited in Clark & Kolstoe, 1995, p. 15), implying that the career development process never ends, but continues from preschool throughout one's life. This is supported by Clark's and Kolstoe's assumption that "one's career is one's progress, or transition, through life as a family member, citizen, and worker" (p. 31) as well as a friend and student.

To ensure movement through career development processes, we need to encourage students to continually ask questions about which decisions come next. Of course, after one question is answered, the need to make other decisions crops up—for example, the question "Do I want to pursue this career or the other one?" After selecting a career area, the question arises, "Do I want to take business accounting or computer keyboard classes?" This in turn can lead to another question: "Should I attend a 2-year or a 4-year college?" Before students can make such decisions they must assess *where they are*, *where they want to go*, and *how they want to get there*, as well as many other questions related to their future. These decision-making junctures are signals of transition needs that require assessment. After each assessment, new junctures emerge and the transition assessment cycle continues. As students develop their career paths relative to vocational, educational, social, and personal options, they will face new decision-making points that relate to all areas. Again, each decision point marks a transition or a change from current status to a new or different status.

WHAT ARE THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PHASES?

The career development process is a sequence of self-knowledge. The sequence includes (1) *career awareness*, (2) *career exploration*, and (3) *career preparation* phases. Brolin (1993) identified a fourth phase, *career "assimilation,"* which he defined as "placement, follow-up, and continuing education" (p. 2). This phase typically occurs after one leaves school and enters the world of work. Regardless of what we call the last stage, assimilation is characterized by job and career changes, advancements, and eventually retirement activities (Leconte, 1994).

Typically the first three phases are addressed in school, but occupational categories and job markets change so rapidly that people are constantly engaged in career awareness and exploration long after they leave school. The influx of computer usage has occurred in the work lives of almost everyone, from unskilled or semiskilled jobs to highly advanced professional positions (e.g., using computers to move manufactured pieces through assembly; setting the gauges on fryers and grills in fast food restaurants; word processing written manuscripts; programming centrifuges for scientific experiments). Futurists project that within the next 5 to 10 years most jobs will require computer use (O'Neil, 1995). Therefore,

awareness and exploration, as well as preparation, will be required of people who are already employed, as well as those who are not yet working.

The four phases of career development are described in terms of their typical affiliation with age and educational levels. Figure 2-1 illustrates the order of phases and accompanying assessment that can take place. *Assessment for transition is needed whenever any change is imminent (meaning short-term goals and objectives) or planned (meaning long-term goals and objectives) and when one moves from any environment, situation, circumstance, or status to another.*

People do not progress at the same rate, nor do they all need the same experiences. In fact, the notion of a continuum is misleading. It is more accurate to think of career development aspects and the needs associated with them as parts of a mosaic. Different people need different pieces of the mosaic at different times. There is nothing uniform about when someone will voluntarily or involuntarily face a life change.

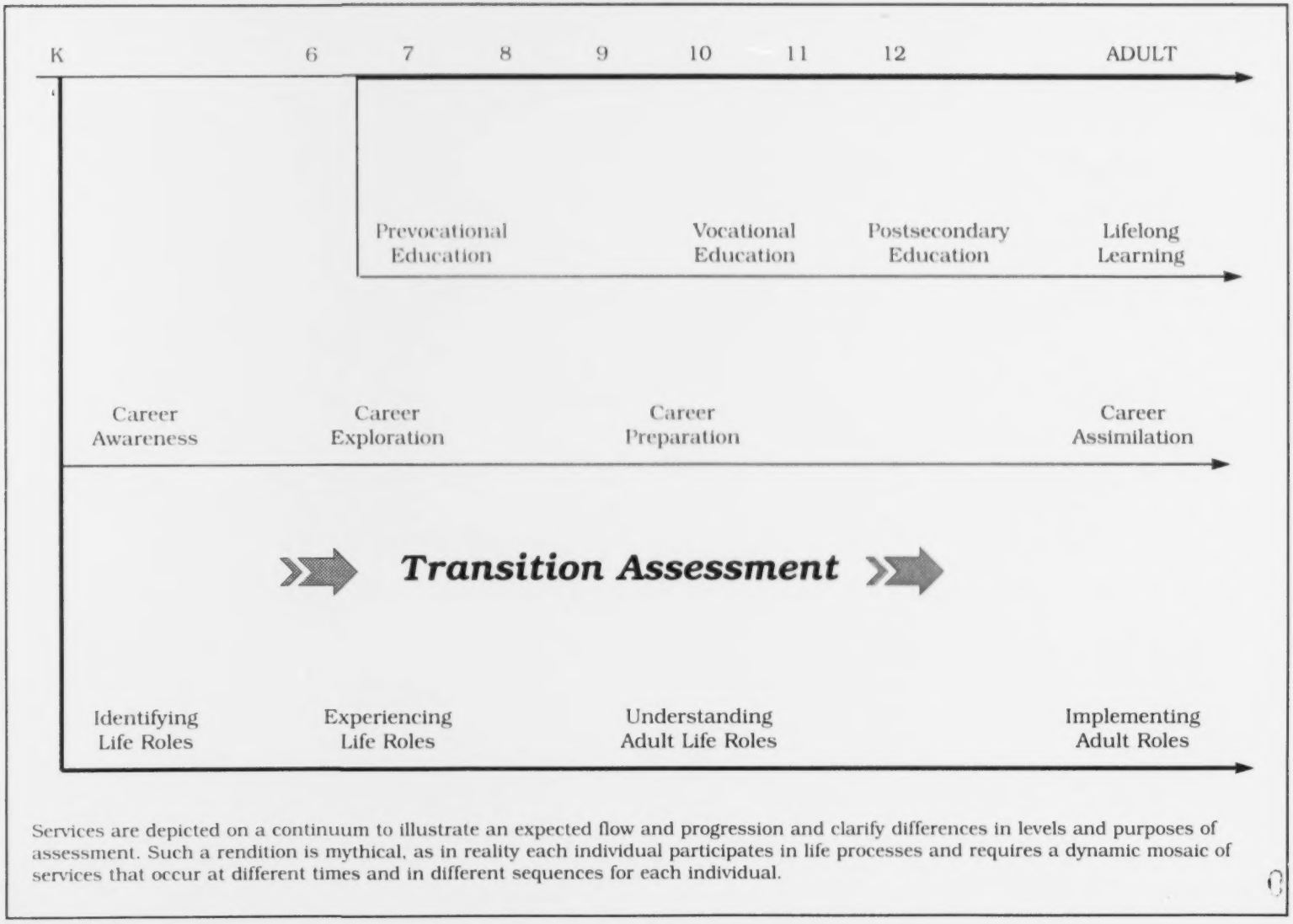
The "expected" continuum in Figure 2-1 is depicted in linear phases that correlate with specific grade levels through adulthood and appear to occur simultaneously and continuously. It is assumed that career education then occurs whenever it is needed throughout life. Eventually, responsibility for career education can be transferred from educators to students themselves. Without this transfer their career development processes are not self-determined, but prescribed by others. As later chapters explain, assessment is integral to the self-determination process for all students with disabilities, even those with the most severe conditions.

When self-determination skill development is emphasized during school, students are better prepared to self-assess and direct their career development when they assume their diverse life roles. Even as adults, most people need assessment and support for upcoming transitions or those that may be thrust upon them, such as losing a job, changing job responsibilities, losing parents, acquiring a new disability, changing residences, or receiving a job promotion.

Career Awareness

The initial phase begins as students discover the existence of work, jobs, and various careers, as well as options such as college and participating in community and leisure activities. Usually this phase occurs as they move from their protected worlds at home to the new settings of school and community; it begins prior to elementary school and continues throughout life. Activities such as educational visits to fire stations, water companies, and offices promote career awareness and are designed to expand self-awareness and knowledge of community occupations as well as demonstrate how students can get along with others (Levinson, 1993). The awareness phase includes making cause-and-effect connections (e.g., people work to

FIGURE 2-1
"Expected" Continuum of Services



Services are depicted on a continuum to illustrate an expected flow and progression and clarify differences in levels and purposes of assessment. Such a rendition is mythical, as in reality each individual participates in life processes and requires a dynamic mosaic of services that occur at different times and in different sequences for each individual.

earn money to acquire material goods; people who live on their own must pay to live) is one part of awareness. Later, more complex connections are made, such as working to accomplish things one believes in or doing something that one enjoys. If students have not gained sufficient awareness of the world of work, they will have difficulty moving into the next phase of career development, which is career exploration.

> For example, if a 19-year-old student with severe cognitive disabilities spends his spare time playing with his elementary school-aged neighbors and is not required to perform any household chores, he may not be prepared to make career decisions or specific job choices that his teacher, counselor, and parents are encouraging him to make. Rather than getting angry with him because he does not perform on job trials in the community and because he claims he dislikes all the jobs he has tried, it may be important to "start where he is." His teachers, counselor, and parents must introduce him to the demands of work, job responsibilities and performing chores. Rather than asking him to perform work and make definitive vocational decisions, assessment must be conducted to determine whether (a) he understands what work requires of him, (b) he knows that eventually he will be seeking full-time employment, and (c) he sees himself as an adult worker and where he sees himself working. By starting with such basic assessment questions, he is initiating his transition to adult worker with typical responsibilities. Through these experiences he may learn about the role work plays in adult life and the possibilities of doing something he really enjoys (working).

Career Exploration

The second phase of career development involves students interacting physically, emotionally, and behaviorally with various aspects of work in different occupational areas. Students also learn about postsecondary options and the differences between the lifestyles of workers who have high skills and those who do not. Educational and family activities such as accompanying adults to work, trying different courses in school, shadowing workers, and actually working in part-time or volunteer jobs represent exploratory ways of facilitating the career development process. Visits to career-technology programs and participating in job try-outs and situational assessments are appropriate during this phase. These activities provide students with knowledge and skills to refine their attitudes toward work and encourage them to develop decision making skills, connect educational requirements with different occupations and careers, and begin to create personal career plans (Levinson, 1993).

> For instance, a 16-year-old student with mild cerebral palsy is ready to explore more careers and may be willing to start career preparation because she has enjoyed electives in school (e.g., technology education, computer keyboard classes, and drafting). Also, she has visited with various friends and members of her family on their jobs and volunteered as a reproduction clerk in a small computer-assisted drafting company. Her job as a camp counselor's assistant last summer helped her understand the nature of work demands. In addition, she has discussed educational requirements for certain careers with her teachers and family and has used career information

systems in the career center with her counselor. Her next step for transition assessment suggests she try to assimilate her experiences and satisfactory academic performances in all classes to make specific career decisions, but she feels she needs more direction. She decides to participate in additional assessment to learn more about her abilities, preferences, and goals.

Indeed, the self-discoveries she will make through assessment may help her decide whether she wants to continue on her college preparation track in high school, or go to the career technology program in computer-assisted drafting, where she can matriculate into architectural design at the local community college, or move into a totally different career direction. Because she also knows she will need some accommodations in any program or classes she pursues, assessment will help her figure out which assistive technology devices or modifications might work.

Career Preparation

The third phase of career development, career preparation, involves acquiring career and vocationally related skills. The goals of career preparation include acquiring basic transferable skills, developing specific vocational skills, and continuing to develop employability skills such as problem-solving, adapting to change, and working cooperatively with others. In this phase students actually experience such activities as earning wages, participating with adults in work and community cultures, establishing adult friendships, managing their finances, and providing their own transportation. Typically, students participate in career preparation during high school and beyond. Also, they refine career goals and pursue courses that help them attain their goals.

Vocational education represents a major portion of the career preparation phase in any career development process and is designed to prepare students to become productive, *skilled* citizens. Through vocational education students begin to understand their preferences and compatibilities with other adult roles (e.g., taxpayer, coworker, driver, voter, rider of public transportation). Vocational education occurs in high school and/or following graduation; it is included in everyone's life-long career education continuum or mosaic, and it facilitates the career preparation stage of development (Sitlington, Brolin, Clark, & Vacanti, 1985).

Vocational education programs represent options of organized sequences of courses that include "competency-based applied learning which contributes to an individual's academic knowledge, higher order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, general employability skills and occupational-specific skills necessary for economic independence" (Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990). Occupational fields of preparation can include agriculture, business, home economics, health, marketing and distributive education, technology and industrial arts, trade and industry (e.g., drafting, electronics, carpentry, graphic arts, cosmetology), and other technical occupations.

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (Perkins Act) underscores the developmental and educational aspects of vocational education versus the short-term job skill training philosophy that drives job training programs such as those sponsored by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Specific job training is another career preparation option, and these programs are designed to place people in or return them to work as quickly as possible (whereas vocational education enhances life-long vocational development). Many people choose a third option for learning about work—they learn on the job. This option is predicted to be less prevalent in the future, which makes it more important for educators to help students gain skills during school.

> After taking a couple of interest inventories in middle school and ninth grade, a 16-year-old identifies interest in owning a business about 10 years from now. His experiences as custodian for a local florist and his good grades in math lead him to believe he could own a flower shop of his own. After investigating high school courses and postsecondary training programs, he decides to take marketing and distributive education classes, which will provide skills in retailing, bookkeeping, supervising workers, setting up displays, and working with customers. He asks his boss if he can work as an apprentice to learn the florist's trade, and he plans to take a special 6-month course offered by the Small Business Administration to learn how to own and operate a successful business. He also plans to attend his community college at night to take floral design and horticulture to earn an associate's degree. While attending the community college, he hopes to share an apartment with a friend who shares many of his outside interests in sports, music, and cooking.

Career Assimilation

For all people, but especially those with disabilities, the transition process, with accompanying assessment and support, may need to "kick in" again as they lose jobs, change jobs, or seek advancement. For example, it has been found that people with learning disabilities may experience difficulty in problem solving, adapting to change, or generalizing their job-seeking skills from one situation to another, regardless of the support, training, or success they may have experienced previously. Transition assessment within this phase can occur while a student is still in school.

> For instance, after a 17-year-old student with a serious traumatic brain injury worked for 3 months in an animal shelter, the owner had to lay her off. The decision making that followed required her to reassess her interests and her abilities to perform in different work environments, as well as her job-seeking skills. Also, she had to assess her ability to get to the various new job options, because she no longer drives. She seeks assistance from her special education teacher and her new rehabilitation counselor. Together they decide she should take some interest inventories, conduct a number of informational interviews with various community workers, and participate in a number of job try-outs during her last year in school. After trying out and receiving feedback about her performances on seven different job explorations, she decides to work as an apprentice to a dog groomer and try to gain entrance into a special training program being offered through adult education in her community.

Recognizing Where Students Are in Their Developmental Processes

The checklist in Figure 2-2 can be used as a starting point for developing procedures for identifying where students are within their career development continua. This list is not exhaustive, and it may vary within some cultural frameworks. It is presumed that these benchmarks may need to be checked periodically because awareness, exploration, preparation, and assimilation will occur in cycles throughout life.

ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT PHASES

Certain questions can be posed to help determine where students are in their developmental processes. Figure 2-3 provides some examples of questions, responses to which can lead to other, more targeted questions. When students discuss career options and work, discussions regarding other aspects of adult life naturally ensue. Also, questions such as "What have you dreamed of doing when you finish school?" need not be limited to the vocational realm, but responses can address marriage, travel, and avocational goals (e.g., "I want to be a good father," "I want to visit Australia").

SUMMARY

Every individual progresses through his or her own career development process and forms a unique career identity. However, not everyone moves at the same rate or has the same goals or needs. First, it is critical to determine where an individual is in the career development process: Is he or she in the awareness, exploration, preparation, or assimilation phase? Also, it is essential to assess the individual, especially in conjunction with critical change or transition junctures as well as within existing or potential environments, circumstances, and situations. Transition junctures occur within each career development stage. All people, including those with disabilities, are involved in different phases of the career development process at various unprescribed and unpredictable times during their lives. The content and direction of a person's career development process and appropriate, relevant transition assessment are personally tailored to his or her dreams, goals, interests, abilities, and particular needs.

Halpern's (1994) definition of transition, a process involving a "change in status from behaving primarily as a student to assuming emergent adult roles in the community", (p.117), implies that different sets of questions must be asked at each career development stage—for each life role that a person assumes (citizen, student, worker, family member, friend). Attention to career development ensures that students progress on their personal career paths—even after high school—depending on the support and coordination of a myriad of professionals, students' families, and themselves. To ensure that career development is not a single event or a one-time activity, but an ongoing process, students must become as empowered as possible to determine their own pathways, make their own decisions, and sustain personal growth and development.

FIGURE 2-2
Career Development Checklist

Career Awareness

- Can identify parents' and other family members' jobs.
- Can describe what parents and others do on their jobs.
- Can name and describe at least 10 different occupations.
- Can describe how people get jobs.
- Can describe at least three jobs to investigate.
- Can discuss what happens if adults cannot or do not work.
- Can identify why people have to get along with each other to work.

Career Exploration

- Can discern the difference between a job and a career.
- Can identify three ways to find out about different occupations.
- Can state at least three things they want in a job.
- Can identify the steps in finding a job.
- Can identify at least three careers they want to explore.
- Can state preferences for indoor vs. outdoor work, solitary work versus working with others, and working with their hands and tools/machines versus working strictly with their minds.
- Can identify how to get applications and how to complete them.
- Can discuss why interviews are important.
- Can identify their strengths, abilities, skills, learning styles, and special needs regarding work or specific jobs.

Career Preparation

- Can identify career/vocational courses they want to take in school.
- Can describe the educational and work requirements of specific careers and jobs.
- Can identify where education and training can be obtained.
- Can explain steps in acquiring the skills necessary to enter a chosen field or job.
- Can describe entry level skills, course or job requirements, and exit level competencies to succeed in courses.
- Can identify community and educational options and alternatives to gaining education and employment in a chosen field.
- Can identify the worker characteristics and skills in working with others that are required in a chosen field or job.

Career Assimilation

- Can identify steps to take if they want to advance in their place of employment.
- Can identify educational benefits and ways of gaining additional training through their employment.
- Can explain fields that are related to their current work in which they could transfer.
- Can identify ways to change jobs without losing benefits or salary.
- Can describe appropriate ways of leaving or changing jobs and companies.
- Can relate their skills to other occupations or avocations.
- Can explain retirement benefits.
- Can identify and participate in leisure activities that they can pursue after they retire.

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

FIGURE 2-3
Relevant Assessment Questions for Career Development

Awareness Phase

- What is work?
- What is a job?
- What are some jobs you know about?
- What kind of work do people do on these jobs?
- What have you dreamed of doing when you finish school?
- What kind of job do you want?
- Where do you want to live, and with whom, when you are grown up?
- Why do people work? Why do you want to work?
- What do you enjoy doing when you are not in school?
- What jobs do your mother, father, and other family members have?
- What types of things do they do on their jobs?
- What is college? Why do people go to college? What is vocational training?
- What is public transportation? How would you get where you want to go if your parents did not drive you?
- What is voting?

Exploration Phase

- What jobs are you interested in visiting?
- What exploratory courses would you like to take in school?
- What hobbies do you have?
- What activities do you do in your spare time?
- What volunteer or community service work do you do?
- Did you enjoy your summer job? What parts did you like best?
- Do you like being inside or outside better?
- Do you prefer being with other people, or do you enjoy being by yourself?
- Do you enjoy working with your hands and with tools, or do you prefer to solve problems in your head?
- Did you get along well with your classmates? If so, why did you? If not, why didn't you?
- What skills do you have that you can use in these or other courses?

Preparation Phase

- What courses do you need to achieve your career goals?
- What skills will you need to gain entry into those courses?
- How will you prepare to live on your own?
- Will you need to take courses during high school and after?
- Will these courses lead to college courses? Does the school have a tech prep program?
- Do you and your family plan for you to attend college?
- Will you gain the skills needed to succeed in college?
- Will you be able to get a job based on your high school and/or college coursework?
- Does the educational program provide job placement and support?
- Can you gain entry into an approved apprenticeship program?

Assimilation Phase

- Can you continue your training and education after you begin employment?
- Does the employer provide educational benefits?
- How can you advance within the company?
- Can you transfer between departments in the company?
- Does the employer offer a good retirement and benefits package?
- Do you have alternatives to pursue if your employer has to downsize or lay off workers?
- Do you have options for continuing education, even for leisure interests?
- Can you transfer your job skills and avocational skills to other employment?

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

American School Counselor Association. (1993). *Get a life . . . Start now to increase your options later.*

"Your Personal Planning Portfolio for Career Development" is a complete curriculum to accompany the attractive "Get a Life" portfolios. Special bulk purchases are available. Portfolios include personal career plans and categories for assessment information of self-knowledge, life roles, educational development, and career exploration and planning.

Order from:

American School Counselor Association
5999 Stevenson Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22304-3303
(703) 823-9800, extension 388

Brolin, D. E. (1993). *Life-centered career education: A competency based approach* (4th ed.). Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.

These materials are based on over a decade of research. In addition to the book, a complete curriculum is available for purchase; training is also available.

Order from:

The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191-1589
(800) 232-7323

Katski, M. A., Mendelson, M., Foster, J., Tilson, G., & Neubert, D. (1987). *Transitional programming for mildly disabled out-of-school young adults: An implementation manual.* Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Center for Disability Studies and Supportive Training, Transition Programs.

This operational manual describes a step-by-step transition process for out-of-school youth with disabilities. The manual includes assessment strategies, a training curriculum, and materials used in this model demonstration project to facilitate participants' career development process.

Order from:

Department of Teacher Preparation and Special Education
Transitional Special Education
The George Washington University
2134 G Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20052
(202) 994-6170

National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee. (1994). *Program guide: Planning to meet career development needs, school-to-work transition programs.* Washington, DC: Author.

This curriculum and accompanying information are available for reproduction costs from the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC). A majority of states also have state occupational information systems available on computer at reasonable cost. These programs are available free for public use in schools, community colleges, state rehabilitation agencies, and public libraries.

Order from:

NOICC Training Support Center
Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education
1500 West Seventh Avenue

Stillwater, OK 74074-4364
(405) 743-5179

National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee. (1989). *National Career Development Guidelines*. Washington, DC: Author.

This package includes the descriptions and explanations of the national guidelines for career development recommended for *all* students. Recommended resources are also included.

Order from:

NOICC Training Support Center
Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education
1500 West Seventh Avenue
Stillwater, OK 74074-4364
(405) 743-5179

O'Brien, J., & Lyle, C. (1987). *Design for accomplishment*. Lithonia, GA: Responsive Systems Associates.

This training packet outlines the rationale and basic design of personal futures planning. Usually the personal futures packet is provided as part of a training program.

Order from:

Responsive Sytems Associates
Decatur, GA

Rothenbacher, C., & Leconte, P. (1990). Vocational assessment: A guide for parents and professionals. *Transition Summary, 6*, 1–15. Washington, DC: National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities.

Provides an overview of vocational assessment services in public schools for parents and professionals. Includes rationale for conducting vocational assessment and what should be included in vocational assessment services.

Order from:

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)
P.O. Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013-1492
(800) 695-0285
(202) 884-8200

Social Security Administration. (1994). *Graduating to independence*. Baltimore, MD: Author.

In notebook format, the package contains a videotape and computer software. It describes how to access and obtain benefits from the Social Security Administration and includes sections about eligibility criteria, family income requirements, and work incentives.

Order from:

GTI Project Coordinator
SSA, OD, DERP
Graduating to Independence
Room 545 Altmeyer Building
6401 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21235
(410) 965-5419

3

Using Outcomes of Assessment for IEP Planning

This chapter provides the rationale and strategies for using transition assessment in individualized education program (IEP) planning. The purpose of this chapter is to

- Provide an understanding of the basis in the IDEA legislation for integrating transition assessment into the IEP.
- Show how to integrate transition assessment into all parts of the IEP.
- Provide a sample set of IEP goals and objectives related to transition planning.

INTEGRATING TRANSITION ASSESSMENT INTO THE IEP

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) added several provisions to be included in the IEP. For all students age 16 and above (and age 14 or younger if appropriate), the IEP must contain a statement of the transition services, which defines services necessary to achieve postschool outcomes. IDEA goes on to state that transition-related activities "must be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests" [300.18(b)(1)]. Furthermore, IDEA states clearly that the student must be invited to the IEP meeting and is now a central figure in the make-up of the IEP team [300.344(c)(1)].

Prior to this legislation, studies of the content of IEPs revealed few goals and objectives related to career development and life skills (Dowdy, Carter, & Smith, 1990; Gerber & Griffin, 1983). With the implementation of IDEA, schools were charged to use the IEP as the vehicle for planning for anticipated individual student needs beyond the completion of secondary education. This additional mandate significantly shifted the focus of the IEP from the narrow view of planning for interventions to support the student within the school to the broader vision of preparing the student for roles beyond school.

The transition language in IDEA challenges the IEP team to infuse transition planning throughout the IEP in the areas of employment, postsecondary education, maintaining a home, community involvement, and personal and social relationships (Halpern, 1994). Traditionally, IEPs lay out programming for 1 year at a time, but transition programming often requires longer-range planning. The inclusion of transition planning in the IEP should prompt special educators to consider each IEP as an intermediary plan that consecutively leads to the achievement of long-range goals. Thus, IDEA requires a shift in focus for the IEP.

What Is the First Step in Transition Planning Using the IEP?

While the IEP is the primary tool for establishing an annual educational plan, transition planning goes beyond a single meeting and is a multistep process. The process begins by asking the student to define his or her vision for the future. In our educational system, students are seldom asked this type of question and may have difficulty addressing these future-oriented issues. Many students cannot even define their disability or list reasonable accommodations necessary to ensure success. Other students may not be allowed to make even the most simple decisions that affect their day-to-day lives. Many students served through special education are perceived by professionals as being unrealistic or unmotivated and are not considered integral members of their IEP teams by either special education professionals or their families. For students to fully realize their potential, they must be encouraged to develop and use self-advocacy skills. The development of these skills will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Once the student has established a vision for the future, he or she works with the team to assess skills and interests in light of the demands of the desired future living, working, and educational environments. This assessment should reveal the student's present level of functioning compared to what will be needed in the envisioned future. Thus, the assessment is tailored to the student's desired outcomes and provides the foundation for transition planning and service needs that are addressed through the IEP. These needs, preferences, and interests should be identified through comprehensive transition assessment that addresses all the areas of anticipated adult roles. The results of the assessment should subsequently be infused into the IEP.

How Are the Results of Transition Assessment Infused into the PLEP?

The present level of educational performance (PLEP) statement must accurately describe the effect the student's disability has on his or her performance in both academic and nonacademic areas. In addition to academic assessment, assessment results based on the student's desired interests and preferences, such as the requisite skills for a specific job, independent living, community involvement, personal/social relationships, and the ability to self-advocate, should be reported. The PLEP statement highlights

the student's functioning level at the present time and leads to the clarification of student needs. The statement serves as the foundation for the service plan delineated through the IEP.

The PLEP statement should be written in objective, measurable terms that all team members can understand to the extent possible. An example of a statement found in the PLEP section might be that "the student independently uses public transportation regularly to go to and from work and social events." This statement is based on informal information but is critical to the student's mobility within the community. Data reported in the PLEP may be based on informal measures, which are often more functionally descriptive than standardized test results. Test scores from formal assessment measures may be reported in the PLEP statement but should be self-explanatory or presented in functional terms. For example, results of formal aptitude assessment could be included in the statement. However, simply reporting percentile ranking on specific aptitudes means little without the explanation of the relationship this specific aptitude profile has to possible career aspirations. A student who scores in the 20th percentile on spatial relations on the Career Ability Placement Survey (CAPS) (Knapp & Knapp, 1976) may have a difficult time succeeding as an architect. The PLEP statement describing this assessment result could be, "Cathy does not have a realistic view of the demands of her desired career field and needs to carry out further career exploration activities to determine whether her aptitude profile (20th percentile in spatial relations on the CAPS) is a good match with the requirements of her desired career (architect)." This statement presents a standardized score, but puts it in the context of need and desired outcomes.

How Are the Results of Transition Assessment Used in IEP Planning?

Upon completion of the PLEP statement, the IEP team develops a plan for special education services. Although IEP formats differ markedly among school districts, each need area addressed in the PLEP must also be addressed within the subsequent sections of the IEP, which include the statement of needed transition services, educational goals and objectives, and the related service plan. Some needs listed in the statement of needed transition services are one-shot activities and are not appropriate content for goals and objectives. For example, a student may need to contact the local vocational school to determine enrollment procedures and entrance requirements. This is a one-time activity, does not usually require instruction, and does not involve measurable intermediary steps to arrive at mastery. It is not an appropriate activity for the goals and objective section of the IEP. Depending on the custom in the individual state or school district, this activity could be listed elsewhere, such as in notes from the IEP meeting, or even in the statement of needed transition service section.

Areas of need delineated in the PLEP and the statement of needed transition services that require instruction and student achievement over time

should be addressed through annual goals and short-term objectives. Annual goals and short-term objectives should reflect student growth. For example, through assessment it is revealed that a student cannot use units of measurement. The student wants to become a cosmetologist. His future setting demands include accurate measurement of chemicals. His IEP team should generate an annual goal and series of short-term objectives related to the development of relevant measurement skills for this student.

Some areas of need may not require formal instructional services. For example, a student wants postsecondary education but cannot afford tuition. The transition service that should be delineated during the IEP meeting would be for "the student to contact the financial aid officer at the community college and a vocational rehabilitation counselor to determine the availability of financial support." Thus, the IEP would specify agency linkages to meet the student's need.

The types of services schools should include in the IEP are delineated through the IDEA legislation and include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives, and the acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation, if appropriate.

What About Interagency Linkages?

An additional provision of IDEA requires that schools develop interagency linkages with adult service agencies that can serve students with disabilities as they leave the educational system and make their transition to adult roles. This need for interagency collaboration reflects the realization that students cannot be totally prepared to assume their adult roles upon completion of their public school education and may continue to require support as their adult roles emerge. The need for the linkages that will provide support to the young adult should be identified through the transition assessment process. The actual interagency linkages and services to be provided should be outlined in the statement of needed transition services. For example, a student is planning to attend the local community technical college. Through transition assessment, it is determined that the student will need assistance in asking for accommodations from his college teachers. To address this concern, he will work with the disability support office at the community college. As mandated by IDEA, a representative from the community college should be invited to attend the IEP meeting. The services that will be provided through the community college should be included in the statement of needed transition services in the IEP. For a student needing support in independent living, a representative from the Developmental Disabilities Association could be invited to the meeting to discuss community housing options.

The focus on transition planning and services has caused special educators to reshape the individualized educational planning process. This

transformation has moved the focus from inside the school walls to the world beyond. While the value of this major change cannot be disputed for students with disabilities, the obligation for carrying out this shift has clearly been placed upon the local school district. It is only natural for special educators to have questions and concerns related to fulfilling this obligation.

CASE STUDIES

Guidelines on how to write a statement of needed transition services and formats vary from state to state. The case studies that follow represent some examples of how the concepts presented in this chapter can be applied. These cases include the statement of needed transition services written in narrative form, as well as examples of both formal and informal transition assessment. Sample transition goals and objectives are included with each of the case studies.

How Do I Apply These Concepts to a College-Bound Student with Mild Disabilities?

Student History. Matt always knew that he would go to college. All of his brothers and sisters were going. Why shouldn't he? When Matt was 9 years old, he was identified as having a learning disability and was served through a special education resource room 2 hours a day in the areas of reading, writing, and spelling. He really did not like being pulled out of class to go to another room.

Transition Assessment. When Matt got to high school, his special education teacher asked him to talk about what he wanted to do when he was graduated from high school. It was difficult for Matt to share his vision, because no one had ever asked him what he wanted to do. He told his teacher that he wanted to go to college, but he did not have a specific career choice. His teacher talked to him about the benefits of transition planning and the need to start as a freshman getting ready for life after high school. He and his teacher began to plan his transition assessment. Together they decided that Matt would need to be able to self-advocate if he were to be successful in college. Matt thought he was a good self-advocate, but he agreed to ask his physical science teacher for classroom and testing accommodations. He would then ask the physical science teacher to evaluate his ability to self-advocate using an informal checklist that he and his teacher developed. Matt also wanted information related to his current academic functioning. He agreed to do a writing sample as well as take subtests of an achievement test related to reading, writing, and spelling. Matt's teacher also wanted him to tape record an informal interview in which he and his family reviewed his functional living skills and awareness of adult services. Because Matt was not sure what he wanted to major in during college, he agreed to take a computer-based interest inventory.

Assessment Results. Matt was surprised to find out that he had some problems with self-advocacy. He could not describe what accommodations he needed to be successful in physical science. He also had difficulty talking to his physical science teacher about his disability. On the achievement test, Matt scored below grade level on reading, written language, and spelling. He was able to identify three areas of interest on his interest assessment. Both he and his parents described his independent living skills as adequate. Neither Matt nor his parents were aware of any adult service agencies that could assist in Matt's transition. Matt was able to identify several careers he was interested in, but was not able to select just one area of interest. The results of the assessment were included in the present level of performance statement on the IEP.

Transition Planning. As he and his teacher discussed his present level of performance, Matt agreed that he needed to work on self-advocacy skills and admitted that it was harder than he had anticipated to ask for the accommodations he needed. He especially wanted to become more aware of classroom and test-taking modifications that would help him. He also wanted to understand his learning disability and be able to describe it to others without becoming embarrassed. His teacher suggested that he work on acquiring learning strategies through the learning center and apply the strategies to his mainstream classes. Matt also decided that he wanted to explore the career areas of engineering and law enforcement by interviewing persons in those careers. During his junior and senior years, Matt planned to enroll in a career exploration class through which he could job-shadow persons working in the career areas he was interested in. Matt's teacher suggested that he invite a college representative who provides support services to students with disabilities at the local community college and a vocational rehabilitation counselor to his IEP meeting to discuss the services they can provide for Matt as he makes his transition from high school.

Statement of Needed Transition Services. Prior to the IEP meeting, Matt and his teacher met to discuss his assessment results. Based on the results of Matt's assessment, he and his teacher developed the following statement:

> Matt will work with his learning center teacher to develop self advocacy skills, including the ability to ask for reasonable accommodations and the ability to describe his learning disability in functional terms. Matt will also work with the learning center teacher to learn and apply learning strategies to written assignments in his high school classes as preparation for college. He also needs to explore his areas of vocational interest by contacting members of the community who work in the fields of veterinary medicine, sports, and engineering. Matt also needs to contact a vocational rehabilitation counselor and a representative from the local community college to determine what services might be available to assist him in his transition from high school.

Annual Goals and Objectives. Matt and his teacher developed annual goals and short term objectives for two of the areas of need identified in the statement of needed transition services. The areas of self-advocacy and learning strategies each had an annual goal and series of short term objectives.

Annual Goal: Matt will demonstrate self-advocacy skills by requesting reasonable accommodations in each of his classes.

Short-Term Objective: Matt will select from a list provided by the learning center teacher the reasonable accommodations he needs in each of his classes to maximize his success.

Short-Term Objective: Matt will demonstrate his ability to ask for reasonable accommodations by role-playing the situation with 90% effectiveness when rated by a peer and teacher using a teacher-made rating form.

Short-Term Objective: Matt will ask a selected regular education teacher for reasonable accommodations with 90% effectiveness as rated by that regular education teacher using the above-mentioned rating form.

Annual Goal: Matt will apply selected learning strategies related to written communication in the regular classroom.

Short-Term Objective: Matt will select two learning strategies related to written communication that he would like to learn and indicate why.

Short-Term Objective: Matt will demonstrate competence in applying the learning strategies within the learning center by completing independently all of the steps of each strategy as rated by his learning center teacher during two written assignments of his choice.

Short-Term Objective: Matt will generalize the learning strategies to written assignments in his regular classes as indicated by grades of 85% or better in his regular classes.

How Do I Apply These Concepts to a Student with Mild Disabilities Who Will Attend a 2-Year Technical School?

Student History. When Nicole was in eighth grade and preparing to enroll in high school, she was told about classes offered to juniors and seniors that involved art and jobs. It caught her attention because she always enjoyed art but had never thought about being able to work as an artist. Nicole was a sophomore in high school now, and her IEP meeting was 2 months away. Nicole was also working with her special education teacher and guidance counselor on her schedule for the next year. She wanted to enroll in a graphic arts class at the area vocational-technical school next year.

Transition Assessment. Nicole's special education teacher suggested that Nicole needed to think beyond high school to decide whether or not the graphic arts program fit into her overall plan. Her teacher asked her to do an informal assessment activity in which Nicole had to write down what she wanted to do immediately after high school, 5 years later, and 10 years after that. She also asked Nicole what her ideal job would be, where she wanted to live, and how much money she thought she would need to be able to afford the life style she desired. Her teacher suggested that Nicole complete some vocational interest and aptitude assessments. The teacher also contacted the graphic arts teacher and arranged a meeting so that Nicole and she could

determine what skills Nicole would need to be successful in the graphic arts class. The special education teacher worked with the graphic arts teacher to develop a curriculum-based vocational assessment (CBVA) checklist of skills Nicole would be expected to develop through the graphic arts class to determine which skill development activities would require additional support or accommodations. The graphic arts teacher reminded Nicole that she needed to submit a portfolio of artwork before being admitted to the class. Nicole completed an informal transition survey that asked her to assess her own skills related to being able to live on her own. Nicole's foster parents completed the survey as well.

Assessment Results. When Nicole completed the activity that asked her what she wanted to do after high school, she indicated that she hoped to finish her training within 2 years after high school and begin working. By the 5th year out of high school, she wanted to have a full-time job and be living on her own. At the 10-year mark she hoped to be married and living in a house she and her husband owned in the town where she grew up. She knew that if she got married she and her husband would probably both have to work. She also completed interest and aptitude assessments. Both assessments revealed a good match between her stated interest and her assessed interests and aptitudes. Nicole asked her current art teacher to evaluate her skills on the CBVA checklist. She also asked her English teacher to complete the CBVA checklist. Her art teacher felt that Nicole needed extra time to complete assignments, needed to be more careful about the condition of her final work, and needed some work in measurement skills. She felt that, with accommodations, Nicole would have no trouble achieving the items on the checklist. Her English teacher felt that Nicole needed to be more organized and had some trouble translating thoughts to written work. Through the transition survey that Nicole and her foster parents completed, the areas that appeared to need work were budgeting and time management. The results of the assessment were included in the present level of performance statement on the IEP.

Transition Planning. From the results of her assessment, Nicole and her teacher concluded that the graphic arts program through the area vocational-technical school would be a good option for her. Nicole's life goals suggested that a tech prep two-plus-two program in the area of graphic arts would meet her long-range goals. Nicole had no information related to postsecondary options and needed to contact the local technical college to find out about the graphic arts program. Nicole would work with her high school art teacher to determine reasonable accommodations in order for her to be successful. Her special education teacher suggested that Nicole work on organization and time management strategies while in the special education resource room. She also suggested that Nicole review linear measurement skills. To strengthen her money management skills, Nicole decided that she wanted to take a class called applied math, which teaches consumer skills and budgeting.

Statement of Needed Transition Services. Nicole's statement of needed transition services was developed based on her assessment results and planning. It read:

Nicole has identified the area of graphic arts as her career interest. She will work with her guidance counselor to apply for admission to the area vocational-technical program. Nicole will work with her high school art teacher to assemble a portfolio for submission at the time of application. Nicole has invited the admissions counselor and graphic arts teacher to attend her IEP meeting. She will also arrange a meeting with a representative from the local technical college to receive admission information for the postsecondary graphic arts program. Nicole needs to work on money management skills in order to meet her goal of living independently. Through special education, Nicole will work on time management and organization skills. She will also complete a review unit on linear measurement.

Annual Goals and Objectives. The annual goals and short-term objectives included in Nicole's IEP related to time management and organization skills and measurement.

Annual Goal: Nicole will complete and turn in assignments on time in all of her classes.

Short-Term Objective: Nicole will keep an assignment notebook that lists all of her assignments from her classes and due dates with 100% accuracy as determined by teacher spot checks of the notebook.

Short-Term Objective: Nicole will complete and turn in to her special education teacher a weekly assignment checklist on which teachers sign off as assignments are turned in with 100% match.

Annual Goal: Nicole will demonstrate the use of linear measurement.

Short-Term Objective: Nicole will meet with her art teacher and assemble a list of at least five ways linear measurement is used in graphic arts.

Short-Term Objective: Nicole will use a ruler to draw five lines of different lengths with accuracy to 1/8th of an inch.

How Do I Apply These Concepts to a Student with Moderate Disabilities?

Student History. Jamey always liked to be around food. His mother let him help around the kitchen from the time he was 5 or 6 years old. When he went to high school, his favorite classes were always cooking classes. He sometimes needed help from his lab partners in measurement and in increasing or decreasing recipes. He was very good at preparing the ingredients and food presentation. When Jamey turned 16, his teacher began talking to him about what he wanted to do when he got out of school. Although Jamey knew he wanted to go to work someday, he was not really sure whether he wanted to be a chef. He only knew about the jobs he saw on television, and some of those looked pretty good. Jamey was not sure that he ever wanted to move out of his parents house. He was comfortable there, and moving out scared him. He hoped to continue in Special Olympics so that he could stay in touch with his friends. His IEP was 1 month away, and his teacher needed to determine Jamey's specific transition needs to be incorporated in the IEP.

Transition Assessment. Jamey's transition assessment was designed to determine his skills related to employment, independent living, community involvement, and knowledge of community resources. Jamey was asked to fill out an informal interest assessment with the help of the paraprofessional. Jamey's special education teacher asked his foods teacher to complete a checklist related to work behaviors and skills that Jamey demonstrated in the foods class. His special education teacher placed Jamey in a 3-week situational assessment in the school cafeteria with a job coach to determine his level of work-related skills. His teacher sent home an informal transition checklist for Jamey's family to complete, which asked them to assess his present functioning related to daily living skills, self-help skills, community involvement, and knowledge of community resources. Jamey and his teacher filled out a copy of the same informal assessment.

Assessment Results. Jamey indicated a strong interest in food service but moderate interest in all other areas on the interest assessment. Jamey's foods teacher identified several areas of strengths and needs in his performance in the foods class. During Jamey's job sample in the cafeteria, the data collected by his job coach were consistent with his foods teacher's evaluation. Some additional observations were that Jamey became distracted easily, especially when learning new jobs, and that he did not ask for assistance when he did not know what to do. He also had a low production rate. His quality of work was excellent once he knew all of the steps in a task, however. On Jamey's transition survey, several areas of need were identified. Jamey's parents reported that he did no chores at home, including making his bed or caring for his own clothing. Jamey's mother stated that she felt it was easier to do the chores herself than to try to get Jamey to do them. Jamey seemed to manage his money well and had a savings account. He did not seem to know how much things cost, because his parents did all the shopping for him. Jamey's parents expressed their desire for Jamey to live on his own or in a supported living setting within the next 5 to 10 years. They also reported that Jamey was quite active in the Special Olympics and used the public library frequently, but did little else outside of family activities. He rarely called friends from school and was content to sit in his room and play video games for hours at a time. Jamey's parents did not feel that either Jamey or they had much knowledge about community resources. Jamey's survey responses were very similar to those of his parents. His teacher's form was consistent with both the parent and student forms. The results of the assessment were included in the present level of performance statement on the IEP.

Transition Planning. Although Jamey indicated a strong interest in food service, he and his teacher decided to do four 3-week job samples in the community to try out several different jobs supervised on the work site by a job coach. During the job samples, Jamey would be asked to rate the quality of his work as well as how well he liked the job he was trying. At the end of the 12-week period, Jamey would select the job on which he wanted to be placed with a job coach for paid employment.

Jamey did not seem to want to leave the safe environment of his parents' house and move into an independent living situation. Jamey had never visited any community living options. His teacher decided to arrange a field trip

for her entire class to visit all of the supported living sites in the community. The question of whether Jamey could do daily chores was not resolved through the transition survey. Jamey's teacher suggested that Jamey and his parents contact the local independent living agency to request an evaluation of his independent living skills. She also suggested that they apply for housing this year, because there was at least a 5-year waiting list for supported living apartments in the community.

When discussing the results of the survey, Jamey admitted that he would like to do things with friends and even have a girlfriend but did not know what to do for fun or how to invite friends to do things with him. His teacher suggested that she and Jamey go over the Week-End section of the newspaper to look for events that he and a friend could attend. She also suggested that the class could role-play telephoning each other to ask for a date.

Jamey's teacher also saw the need to hold a meeting for the students in her class and their parents to inform them of the community agencies that could provide transition services. She invited agency representatives to talk to the group. From this meeting, she hoped that parents and students would contact appropriate agencies. She wanted to invite the local vocational rehabilitation counselor to Jamey's IEP meeting. After the parent meeting, both Jamey and his parents agreed that Vocational Rehabilitation could help with transition services for Jamey and should attend Jamey's IEP meeting.

Statement of Needed Transition Services. During Jamey's IEP meeting, the following statement of needed transition services was developed:

> Jamey needs to explore several career options to affirm his interest in food service. He also needs to develop job skills through on-the-job training experiences in the community with a job coach. Jamey needs to explore community living options to build his level of confidence in his ability to live on his own. His functional living skills need to be assessed through a community living agency in a realistic setting. Jamey needs to complete an application for a supported living program and be put on a waiting list. He also needs to complete an application for services with Vocational Rehabilitation for transition support as he moves from high school to employment. Jamey also has social skills needs which will be addressed through instruction in his special education class. Another area to be addressed through instruction and community-based experiences is the area of money management. Jamey does not know how much things cost and has no experience budgeting for expenditures.

Annual Goals and Objectives. Jamey's teacher developed annual goals and short-term objectives related to social skill development and money management.

Annual Goal: Jamey will attend a school dance with a date.

Short-Term Objective: Jamey will identify the dates of the upcoming school dances with 100% accuracy.

Short-Term Objective: Jamey will identify a girl he would like to take to the dance.

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Short-Term Objective: With his special education teacher, Jamey will role-play asking a girl for a date. He will follow 100% of the steps generated through classroom discussion, as monitored by the teacher on a rating scale based on the steps.

Short-Term Objective: Jamey will ask a girl for a date to the dance using 100% of the steps generated by the class and will self-monitor, using the rating scale after the conversation.

Annual Goal: Jamey will develop a budget based on his potential earnings and expenses.

Short-Term Objective: Jamey will list with 100% accuracy the monthly wages for a position in the food service industry he would like.

Short-Term Objective: Jamey will list with 100% accuracy the fixed costs for living on his own for 1 month.

Short-Term Objective: Jamey will develop a budget that takes into account income and expenses for 1 month and reflects a positive balance.

How Do I Apply These Concepts to a Student with Severe Disabilities?

Student History. Nate is 18 years old. He lives with his parents and two sisters. Nate uses a communication board to express his basic needs and has some functional signs. He cannot understand abstract concepts. He uses a wheel chair for mobility. He has some acting-out behaviors when he is bored. He is patient with others who cannot understand his attempts to communicate. He has attended the neighborhood school since he was 12 years old and attends activities monthly with friends he made through a Circle of Friends program offered by his school. He participates in Special Olympics and enjoys being with age-appropriate peers. Nate has participated in some supported work experiences in the community and seems to enjoy productive activity. He likes to watch videos and has used some of the money he has earned to rent movies. He also likes to listen to music. Nate can feed himself but needs assistance toileting.

Transition Assessment. Nate's special education teacher organized a meeting with Nate and his family. After conferring with Nate and his family, she also invited Nate's neighbor, who provides respite care twice weekly, and one of the neighborhood peers who spends the most time with Nate. Nate's occupational, physical, and speech therapists also attended the meeting. Using the McGill Action Planning System (MAPS; Vandercook, York, & Forest, 1989), the teacher asked those who attended Nate's history, what their dreams for Nate were, what their fears were, who Nate really was, his gifts, his needs, and what an ideal school day would be for Nate, especially related to readying him for making the transition from school to the community.

The team decided that it was important for Nate to live in the community, have a job that he enjoys, and maintain social relationships. Nate was described as a person who enjoys friends and needs help with daily living activities such as dressing, getting around the community, preparing meals,

and shopping. The group also talked about Nate's need to be busy and his enjoyment of feeling productive. He was described as fun loving, liking music and sports, eager, wanting to learn, being good at art, loving, and liking people around. The group felt that Nate's remaining time in school should be spent preparing him for the next environment to which he would most likely move. Because he does not generalize easily, his day should be spent in community-based experiences.

Assessment Results. The results of the MAPS activity revealed that Nate needed to be prepared to go to work and live in the community. Because of his level of independent functioning, he would need ongoing support in all of his environments through supported employment, supported living situations, and special transportation. His learning style required that he be taught in the community in order to prepare him for life after school and that adult service agency involvement would be necessary.

Transition Planning. Nate's family discussed possible adult agencies that could provide services for Nate as he made the transition from school to adult living. They agreed that they needed to involve the local vocational rehabilitation counselor and a representative from the County Developmental Disabilities Service Center. Nate's school experience would need to include opportunities for supported employment; community-based experiences related to daily living skills; and speech and language, occupational therapy, and physical therapy services.

Statement of Needed Transition Services. The following statement of needed transition services was developed during Nate's IEP meeting:

> Nate and his parents will contact the Vocational Rehabilitation Office to begin the process of intake for services. Nate and his parents will also contact the County Developmental Disabilities Service Center to begin the process of intake for services. Nate and his parents will contact three supported living centers to determine the options available to Nate for independent living. Nate will continue to work with a job coach in the community in a variety of job settings for 3 hours each day to increase his vocational skills and to determine which job he is most interested in. Nate will also participate in daily living activities in the community such as shopping, laundry, and using public transportation at least 5 hours each week. Nate will continue to participate in the Circle of Friends group and Special Olympics.

Annual Goals and Objectives. Nate's parents and his teacher developed goals and objectives for two of the areas listed in the statement of needed transition services.

Annual Goal: Nate will increase his vocational skills by increasing his production rate.

> *Short-Term Objective:* Nate will increase his production rate on a job related to light industry by 10% over baseline during a 2-week period.

Short-Term Objective: Nate will increase his production rate on a job related to clerical tasks by 10% over baseline during a 2-week period.

Short-Term Objective: Nate will increase his production rate on a job related to the service industry by 10% over baseline during a 2-week period.

Annual Goal: Nate will demonstrate the ability to shop in a grocery store.

Short-Term Objective: Given a picture grocery list with five items on it, Nate will find four out of five items within a 30-minute period in a grocery store near his home during three consecutive visits.

Short-Term Objective: Nate will make a grocery list containing five items from food pictures and/or from coupons.

Short-Term Objective: Nate will purchase a soft drink from a machine independently on 2 consecutive days.

SAMPLE TRANSITION GOALS AND SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES[1]

The following are suggested goals, objectives, and activities to assist the teacher in developing the student's transition plan. These goals, objectives, and activities are arranged by the roles adults are expected to assume as identified by Halpern (1994). The format of the goals and objectives varies across states and school districts. The goals and objectives included in the chapter are intended to serve as a springboard from which IEP teams develop individualized goals and objectives based on student need.

I. *Employment.*

Annual Goal 1: The student will develop a realistic career plan.

Short-Term Objective: The student will identify two career interests after completing _[number]_ interest inventories.

Short-Term Objective: The student will list four duties for each job by exploring _[number]_ careers through job shadowing or work samples.

Short-Term Objective: The student will select three (or more) possible careers and identify the training required for these careers.

Short-Term Objective: The student will develop a list of possible occupations/jobs that are a match to personal interests.

Annual Goal 2: The student will develop skills needed for employment in the occupation he or she has selected.

Short-Term Objective: The student will demonstrate the occupationally specific skills needed for the occupation of _____. These will be demonstrated on a community-based job and evaluated through a rating scale completed monthly by the employer.

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[1]Sample goals and objectives adapted from Kearns & Marshall (1991).

Short-Term Objective: The student will demonstrate competence in interviewing for a job by participating in a simulated interview and completing all of the steps on the interview rating form.

Short-Term Objective: The student will list five job openings obtained from a variety of want ads in the newspaper.

Short Term Objective: The student will demonstrate competence in job skills such as attendance, task completion, work rate, and work quality as demonstrated by receiving a B or better on community-based work evaluations for a 9-week period.

II. *Postsecondary Education.*

Annual Goal 1: The student will enroll in a postsecondary education program that provides education in his or her area of career interest.

Short-Term Objective: The student will identify __[number]__ postsecondary education sites that offer programs related to his or her stated career interest.

Short-Term Objective: The student will list the admittance procedures, prerequisites, and costs for each of the __[number]__ postsecondary sites identified.

Short-Term Objective: The student will select the postsecondary education site that most closely corresponds with his or her occupational goals and resources and state the rationale for this choice.

Short-Term Objective: After touring the postsecondary education sites, the student will identify his or her individual needs and accommodations with admissions personnel.

Short-Term Objective: The student will complete the application procedure for the postsecondary education site selected.

Short-Term Objective: The student will correctly complete applications for financial aid for postsecondary education. Correctness will be defined as the provision of correct information in the correct blanks.

III. *Maintaining a Home.*

Annual Goal 1: The student will demonstrate the ability to secure appropriate housing.

Short-Term Objective: The student will report the amount of rent asked for in __[number]__ ads for housing by __[date]__.

Short-Term Objective: After arranging for and completing a tour of __[number]__ semi-independent residential options, the student will report back to the class five positive and five negative features of each one.

Short-Term Objective: Based on his or her interests and abilities, the student will select the most appropriate living site. The student will provide a rationale for this selection.

IV. *Involvement in the Community.*

Annual Goal 1: The student will participate in leisure time and recreational activities.

Short-Term Objective: The student will identify _[number]_ leisure/recreational activities or organizations in the community.

Short-Term Objective: The student will participate in _[number]_ recreational activity (activities) each week for the next [number] weeks.

Short-Term Objective: The student will list _[number]_ recreational activity (activities) sponsored by two community agencies during the next _[number]_ months.

Short-Term Objective: The student will make plans with a peer to attend a spectator event.

Short-Term Objective: The student will attend an adult-supervised party and participate in age-appropriate activities.

Annual Goal 2: The student will care for his or her own personal needs.

Short-Term Objective: The student will demonstrate the ability to sort laundry by light and dark with 100% accuracy by completing all of the steps on a checklist.

Short-Term Objective: The student will balance a checkbook ledger for a 1 month statement period with 100% accuracy.

Short-Term Objective: The student will demonstrate clean and sanitary dishwashing by completing all of the steps on a teacher checklist.

Short-Term Objective: The student will independently prepare _[number]_ well-balanced meals using foods from the five basic food groups.

Short-Term Objective: From a set of pictures, the student will select the pictures that are of people who are dressed appropriately for work in an office environment with 100% accuracy.

Annual Goal 3: The student will obtain necessary financial/income assistance support.

Short-Term Objective: The student will indicate whether he or she is eligible for income support from the Social Security Administration after contacting it to determine this eligibility.

Short-Term Objective: The student will state whether he or she is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

Short-Term Objective: The student will identify _[number]_ agencies that provide financial assistance/income support.

Short-Term Objective: The student will complete the application process for low income subsidized housing with 100% accuracy.

Annual Goal 4: The student will carry out civic responsibilities.

Short-Term Objective: The student will register to vote by age 18.

Short-Term Objective: The student will register for military service by age 18.

Short-Term Objective: The student will use the public library to check out [number] books one time each month for the next [number] months.

Short-Term Objective: The student will have his or her income tax forms completed by April 15th.

Short-Term Objective: The student will provide volunteer service [number] time(s) per semester.

Annual Goal 5: The student will obtain appropriate medical service.

Short-Term Objective: The student will list [number] situations that would lead him or her to seek assistance by dialing 911.

Short-Term Objective: The student will name his or her hospital of preference.

Short-Term Objective: The student will name his or her doctor and dentist.

Short-Term Objective: The student will select an appropriate doctor and make an appointment in a nonemergency situation.

Short-Term Objective: From a list of [number] physical conditions, the student will be able to identify which physical conditions require a doctor's care with 100% accuracy.

Annual Goal 6: The student will access community services to address personal needs in a variety of settings.

Short-Term Objective: The student will demonstrate the ability to make an appointment with the [barber, hair stylist, dentist, doctor, etc.] by calling the service provider and using his or her calendar to set the appointment.

Short-Term Objective: The student will identify his or her strengths and challenges to a person with whom he or she is familiar.

Short-Term Objective: The student will role-play describing his or her specific challenges/disability to a service provider such as a postsecondary counselor, group home administrator, or adult service agency employee. This role play will be evaluated through the use of a checklist containing the major steps for this process.

Short-Term Objective: The student will contact a community agency and ask for information about its services, following all of the steps generated in class discussion. The student's performance will be rated by the checklist of steps generated in class discussion.

Annual Goal 7: The student will demonstrate the ability to seek effective insurance coverage.

Short-Term Objective: The student will list the [number] types of insurance available to consumers.

Short-Term Objective: The student will list the types of insurance he or she wants to purchase and why.

Short-Term Objective: The student will identify the types of insurance carried by his or her family and whether or not he or she is covered by this insurance.

Short-Term Objective: The student will indicate what is needed to qualify for Medicaid.

Short-Term Objective: Through a role play, the student will demonstrate the steps involved in obtaining selected insurance coverage. Performance will be evaluated by a checklist containing the major steps in this process.

Annual Goal 8: The student will use transportation within the community.

Short-Term Objective: The student will schedule his or her transportation through the special services system for _[number]_ events.

Short-Term Objective: The student will obtain a driver's license.

Short-Term Objective: The student will use regular public transportation to get to work on time for 10 consecutive days.

V. *Satisfactory Personal and Social Relationships.*

Annual Goal 1: The student will demonstrate socially appropriate behaviors in a variety of settings.

Short-Term Objective: The student will role-play appropriate behaviors in given situations, with a rating by peers of 90% on the social behavior checklist.

Short-Term Objective: The student will appropriately greet and introduce himself or herself to a coworker, competing all of the steps on a social skills checklist.

Short-Term Objective: The student will name/identify _[number]_ types of relationships.

Short-Term Objective: The student will initiate a social activity with a peer.

Short-Term Objective: The student will identify the problem, when given a challenging situation, and list three possible solutions.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Bateman, B. D. (1992). *Better IEPs.* Creswell. OR: Otter Ink.

This book presents an excellent overview of the IEP process. It serves as an excellent refresher course for educators who have been in the field and have conducted numerous IEP meetings. The book also serves as a good guide for the beginning educator or parent who wants to know how things should be done.

Order from:

Otter Ink
32223 DeBerry Road
Creswell, Oregon 97426
(503) 895-2144

West, L. L., Corbey, S., Boyer-Stephens, A., Jones, B., Miller, R. J., & Sarkees-Wircenski, M. (1992). *Integrating transition planning into the IEP process.* Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.

This monograph is an inexpensive in-depth guide to integrating transition planning into the IEP process. Included are sample forms.

Order from:

The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191-1589
(800) 232-7323

Van Reusen, A. K., Bos, C. S., Schumaker, J. B., & Deshler, D. D. (1995). *The self-advocacy strategy for education and transition planning.* Lawrence, KS: Edge Enterprises.

This publication is a newer version of the I-Plan Strategy and now includes transition planning. The purpose of the strategy is to prepare students to conduct their own IEP meetings. Included in this book are several self-assessment checklists; the SHARE strategy, which teaches students the

behaviors needed in participating in meetings; and strategy acquisition forms. This is a good method for developing the skills necessary for student participation in the IEP process and for the development of self-advocacy skills. Unlike other strategies developed at the University of Kansas, this strategy may be purchased without going through the training.

Order from:

Edge Enterprises
P. O. Box 1304
Lawrence, KS 66044
(913) 749-1473

4

The Role of Self-Determination in the Transition Assessment Process

Students with disabilities can be taught to be active participants in the transition assessment and planning process. Students with more severe disabilities must also be provided the opportunity for making choices, and family members must be included as integral members of the assessment and planning team. The purpose of this chapter is to

- Explore the concept of self-determination in relation to transition assessment and goal setting.
- Provide examples of student involvement on the assessment team.
- Explore strategies for assessing and developing self-determination skills.

SELF-DETERMINATION, TRANSITION ASSESSMENT, AND GOAL SETTING

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA) specifically states that students must be invited to the individualized education program (IEP) and transition planning meeting [300.344(c)(1)] and that the coordinated set of activities that comprise the transition component of the IEP "must be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests" [300.18(b)(1)]. Due to this emphasis, each student with disabilities must be prepared to become a fully empowered member of the IEP team and to provide input based on information gained through transition assessment procedures.

Educational assessment has always been an integral component of the U. S. school system. Unfortunately, the students who are the "subject" of assessment often become the "object" of assessment (Halpern, 1994). Students with

disabilities are often the passive recipients of assessment activities and seldom see any relevance to their daily lives. They are seldom made aware of the purposes of assessment or take an active role in posing the questions to be answered as a result of assessment procedures. Traditional assessment and testing typically use a vernacular that is familiar to educators but is not understood by students or their families. This is due, in part, to the fact that educators historically have assumed sole responsibility for test administration, test interpretation, and all curriculum and placement decisions that were made as a result of testing. Students with disabilities and their families were not considered to be important participants in this process. The opportunity now exists, through transition assessment, to "alter the 'locus of interpretation' from the examiner to the person being assessed" (Halpern, 1994, p.119). Students must be prepared to conduct self-evaluations, interpret assessment results, and create educational goals that are based on assessment information. To achieve these goals, transition assessment approaches must address the preparation of students to become active players on assessment and planning teams.

Data generated through transition assessment activities must be made available to the student and presented in a context that is readily interpreted by the student. Information compiled as a result of psychometric testing, for example, may mean very little to a student unless the results are discussed within the context of that student's personal aspirations and educational goals. Student-centered transition planning must be based upon an individual's awareness of his or her present level of functioning, a personal vision for the future, and knowing what must be done to get where he or she wants to be. Mithaug (1993) asks this question of students: "What are you willing and able to do to get what you haven't got?"

Ward defined self-determination as "people taking control, without undue external influence, over what affects their lives" (1988, p. 2). According to Ward, the personal traits underlying self-determination include (a) self-actualization, (b) assertiveness, (c) creativity, (d) pride, and (e) self-advocacy. Self-actualization is defined as realizing one's potential and living life accordingly. Assertiveness is defined as being able to express one's needs with self-confidence. Creativity is the ability to be innovative, to move beyond stereotyped images and expectations. Pride refers to feeling good about oneself and one's personal contributions to society, while self-advocacy is defined as the ability to act on one's own behalf.

An individual's ability to achieve success and improve his or her quality of life as an adult is in direct relationship to the individual's level of self-determination. While much of the literature on self-determination focuses on involvement in the IEP process, students and their families must also be prepared to apply these skills in all of the settings (employment, post-secondary education, independent living, community involvement, and personal-social relationships) in which an adult is expected to function (Halpern, 1994).

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ON THE ASSESSMENT TEAM

Transition assessment is most meaningful when it relates the personal attributes of the student to the demands of the environment in which the student will function in the near or distant future. Designing assessment approaches based on the student's expressed vision serves as the cornerstone of student empowerment and self-determination. Students with severe disabilities should be presented the opportunity to make choices, and their families should be involved in establishing future goals.

The transition assessment process must be structured so students with disabilities and/or their families can become active participants on the assessment team. Students and/or their families need to have input as to what will be assessed and what data-gathering methods will be employed by the team. This can be accomplished, in part, by basing assessment activities on the student's and/or family's vision for the future. Once the vision is known, the questions that need to be addressed through assessment procedures can be developed. The following case studies illustrate questions that can help turn a student's vision into a reality.

Case Study 1

Suzanne, a junior in high school, had a vision of becoming a veterinary technician, getting her own apartment within 2 years of high school graduation, and purchasing a car. Suzanne's teacher helped her brainstorm the steps it would take to accomplish her vision. Assessment questions generated during the brainstorming session included the following:

1. What skills will I need to succeed in the veterinary technician program?
2. What skills do I need to live on my own?
3. What skills do I need to purchase and own a car?
4. What skills do I have to succeed in the veterinary technician program?
5. What skills do I have to live on my own?
6. What skills do I have to purchase and own a car?
7. What skills will I need to learn in order to succeed in the veterinary technician program?
8. What skills do I need to develop to live on my own?
9. What skills do I need to develop to purchase and own a car?
10. What support services will I need to succeed in the veterinary technician program?
11. What support services will I need to live on my own?
12. What support services do I need to purchase and own a car?

Suzanne identified a nearby community college that offered a 2-year certificate program in her career interest area. She then contacted the college to determine what the entrance requirements were. With respect to independent

living, Suzanne decided that she and her parents needed to fill out an informal checklist that assisted her in identifying the daily living skills she would need to live on her own. With help from her teacher, she designed an informal assessment strategy to measure her ability to budget money. As a result, Suzanne researched and determined the typical wages of a veterinary technician, listed her fixed monthly expenses, and then designed a budget based on this information. Suzanne and her teacher also wanted to know whether Suzanne was prepared to be a self-advocate. To resolve that issue, they designed a list of interview questions that Suzanne could use with her family and other teachers to determine which, if any, self-advocacy skills she needed to develop prior to attending the community college.

Once the assessment data were collected, Suzanne's teacher assisted her in interpreting the results. As a result of academic testing, she found that her current academic skills needed some improvement over the next year. She also learned that her learning disability in the area of written language was still significant. This would qualify her for support services while attending the community college. A review of the daily living checklist revealed that laundry and basic home maintenance were skills that needed further attention. During the financial budgeting exercise, Suzanne ran out of money about halfway between pay periods. Additional instruction in this area was clearly needed. Although Suzanne exhibited a number of self-advocacy skills as indicated by interviewing her family and teachers, it was felt that she had difficulty asking for help when she needed it, was not too familiar with community resources, and knew very little about her legal rights. Suzanne and her teacher developed a list of goals and strategies for improving her skills in each of these areas.

In the preceding case study, the student was directly involved in various phases of transition assessment. The student expressed her interests, preferences, and abilities; she assisted in the development of assessment methods and questions; she conducted some of the data-gathering activities; and she worked with the teacher in developing goals and strategies in response to the assessment results. It is likely that this student will assume greater responsibility for obtaining the skills necessary to be successful and independent in the adult world.

Case Study 2

Brian lived with his family and had a job supported by a job coach in the community. He had turned 18 this year, and his transition specialist and family agreed that they needed to meet to refine the plan for his transition from school to his adult roles. Brian indicated through his communication board that he would like to participate in the planning meeting. His transition specialist asked Brian and his parents to indicate who should attend the meeting. His parents and transition specialist generated a list of potential participants, and Brian indicated through a yes/no response those persons he wanted to include. He also added two of his friends.

A meeting was held that included Brian's parents, his sister, his special education teacher, one of his regular education teachers, his job coach, the transition specialist, and two of his friends. The purpose of the meeting was to establish a vision for Brian's future related to employment, postsecondary

education, independent living, community involvement, and personal-social relationships. The consensus of the group was that Brian really enjoyed working as a copy clerk assistant. He hoped to not go to school again in the near future. He wanted to eventually move into an apartment and attend sporting events, movies, and concerts. He hoped to maintain his friendships with the other young men in his Circle of Friends group. The transition specialist generated a list of assessment questions related to the vision established during this meeting. The questions included the following:

1. What skills are needed to succeed as a copy clerk assistant, live on his own, attend spectator events in the community, and maintain friendships?
2. What skills did Brian have related to employment as a copy clerk assistant, living on his own, attending spectator events in the community, and maintaining friendships?
3. What were the missing pieces that Brian needed in order to be successful at work, in an apartment, during spectator events, and in maintaining friendships?
4. What skills were likely for Brian to learn in his last 3 years of education related to his goals?
5. What support services was Brian going to need to be able to be successful in his future environments?

The participants in the planning meeting brainstormed a list of skills that were most likely needed to succeed as a copy clerk assistant; living in an apartment; attending sporting events, movies, and concerts; and maintaining friendships. Brian's transition specialist offered to validate the list by meeting with someone who supervises copy clerk assistants. Brian's special education teacher volunteered to meet with the supervisor of a supported living program in the community to validate the independent living list. Brian's parents asked to meet with an occupational and recreational therapist to validate the list of skills for spectator events. Brian's friends volunteered to talk to other friends to determine what skills are needed to maintain friendships. The group then agreed to get together again to discuss their findings and plan how to assess Brian's skills related to these areas.

A second meeting was held in which each modified list of skills was presented and the group, including Brian, rated Brian on the skills. Brian had several skills in each area along with some needs. The group then talked about which need areas could be translated into educational objectives and which needs would require ongoing support. From this list, an IEP and a list of potential agency linkages was generated.

ASSESSING AND DEVELOPING SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS

Assessment of self-determination traits should be central to comprehensive transition assessment activities. Table 4-1 outlines the traits of self-determination identified by Ward (1988). This table also provides a sample of questions related to self-determination that need to be addressed during assessment and examples of assessment tools that could be used to answer these questions.

TABLE 4-1
Self-Determination Skills Assessment

Self-Determination Skills	*Assessment Question*	*Assessment Tools*
1. Self-Actualization What is the level of match between ability, functioning, and desired adult environments?	A. What are the student's aptitudes? B. What is the student's present level of functioning? C. What are the student's desired adult environments?	a. Aptitude assessment instruments b. Situational assessments c. Transition surveys d. Interviews
2. Assertiveness Does the student express his or her needs?	A. What are the student's areas of need? B. What is the student's style of communication?	a. Transition surveys b. Situational assessments c. Teacher/family/student observations
3. Creativity Does the student apply knowledge to solve problems?	A. How does the student approach problems? B. Does the student know his or her personal rights? C. Is the student knowledgeable about community resources?	a. Teacher/family/student observations b. Informal student checklist c. Interviews
4. Pride Is the student satisfied with his or her accomplishments?	A. Does the student exhibit high levels of self-esteem? B. Does the student know what he or she has accomplished across all of his or her life roles?	a. Formal self-esteem inventories b. Teacher/family/student observations c. Portfolio assessment
5. Self-advocacy Does the student act on his or her own behalf?	A. Can the student function independently in his or her desired adult environments? B. Can the student ask for assistance when it is needed? C. Does the student know where to seek assistance in each of his or her desired life roles?	a. Situational assessments b. Teacher/family/student observations c. Interviews

As indicated earlier in this chapter, students with disabilities must be prepared to assume greater responsibility for developing, implementing, and evaluating the transition goals and objectives that are written into IEPs. Evaluating the student's readiness to assume this role is an important function of transition assessment activities. Moreover, transition assessment should generate a record of student self-determination skills exhibited during the IEP meeting, as well as the student's level of independence in carrying out IEP goals and objectives.

Self-Determined IEP Assessment

Lombard (in press) proposes a three-stage assessment process that evaluates student self-determination skills with respect to the IEP process (See Figure 4-1). The assessment process is broken down into the three stages of IEP preparation, IEP performance, and IEP implementation.

For students with disabilities to be active participants in the IEP meeting, a number of premeeting activities should be undertaken to ensure that the students have been adequately prepared for their role in the process. The importance of assessing students' readiness to participate in the IEP meeting cannot be overstated. If the answer to any of the assessment questions is no, additional instruction should take place to ensure that the student is adequately prepared for this very important event.

Once students with disabilities have been prepared to participate in the IEP meeting, they are ready to become active players on the IEP team. The intent is to have students fully participate in all phases of discussion related to their educational planning. The focus of assessment questions is now oriented toward the level of self-determined behavior exhibited during the IEP meeting itself.

After the IEP meeting has concluded, the assessment team evaluates the extent of student ownership for implementing IEP goals and objectives. As a result of self-determination activities, students with disabilities should have a greater understanding of their individual roles in implementing the goals, objectives, and activities of the IEP. At this stage, transition assessment team members need to monitor the extent to which students independently carry out the activities prescribed within the IEP.

Assessing student preparation to participate in the IEP process, observing student behavior during the IEP meeting, and evaluating the extent to which students are implementing IEP goals and objectives are each important transition assessment activities. Although the IEP process is only one forum where students with disabilities can demonstrate self-determination skills, it does provide a valuable context for assessing student readiness to initiate self-determined behavior in multiple settings both within and outside the educational setting.

FIGURE 4-1
Assessing IEP Self-Determination Skills

IEP Preparation

1. Does the student understand the purpose of the IEP meeting?
2. Can the student explain the law guaranteeing his or her rights and requiring the IEP?
3. Does the student know who will be attending the IEP meeting?
4. Who does the student want to invite to the IEP meeting?
5. Does the student know what roles the IEP participants will play?
6. Has the student reviewed current assessment information?
7. Has the student developed a list of personal goals to share at the meeting?
8. Has the student developed a list of questions to ask at the meeting?
9. Has the student practiced expressing his or her interests, preferences, and strengths?
10. Is the student prepared to ask for instructional and/or curriculum accommodations?

IEP Performance

1. Did the student know who was in attendance at the IEP meeting and their roles?
2. Was the student able to express his or her interests, preferences, and abilities?
3. Did the student express his or her personal goals and aspirations?
4. Did the student ask relevant questions?
5. Did the student request appropriate accommodations (if needed)?
6. Did the student express personal responsibility for goal setting and attainment?
7. Did the student facilitate or cofacilitate the IEP meeting?
8. Is the student satisfied with the IEP meeting outcomes/results?
9. What does the student think could have been done to improve the meeting?

IEP Implementation

1. Does the student attend class on time?
2. Does the student request instructional support when needed?
3. Does the student request testing accommodations when needed?
4. Does the student assume responsibility for successes and failures?
5. Is the student aware of and working toward IEP goals?
6. Does the student believe he or she is receiving the support needed to reach IEP goals?
7. Has the student explored postsecondary options and support services?
8. Can the student explain which postsecondary options match his or her goals and needs?
9. Has the student developed a plan and timeline for contacting adult service providers?

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

Self-Determination Strategies and Curricula

A number of strategies and curricula are available that teachers and families can use to assist students with disabilities to become more self-determined and to apply these skills to the transition planning and IEP process. The selection of a particular strategy should depend on the student's ability to communicate his or her interests and needs through the transition assessment process.

FUTURE Strategy. Begun (1995) has developed a strategy to prepare students for participation in the transition planning process. The strategy contains six steps that lead to student-directed planning (see Figure 4-2).

The strategy title, an acronym using the beginning letter of each step, is "FUTURE." The F stands for "Find facts" about self. This first step toward self-determination includes all of the transition assessment activities the student and the IEP team undertake. The U represents "Understanding self." This step involves the interpretation of assessment results in personal terms. Ability-based results will assist in the development of self-esteem through learning to value one's unique set of experiences, strengths, and accomplishments. The T stands for "Think" about what is required in one's future. This step refers to an analysis of the demands of desired postsecondary settings. This may also include essential functions of a job or entry-level requirements of a training program. "Using the information" is the next step in the process. Here the student is asked to use the information to develop transition plans on the IEP. The plan must be built on the student's knowledge of self, the knowledge of the desired outcomes, and a true synthesis of this information as indicated by the student's acceptance of his or her uniqueness. "R" represents "Reach your goals." This procedure includes carrying out IEP activities and reaching the student's goals. The last step, "Evaluate the outcome," refers to all evaluation of student progress toward goals and the making of any adjustments as necessary to reach the desired outcomes.

This strategy may be used independently with students with mild disabilities. For students with more severe disabilities, the strategy could serve as a guide for the transition assessment and planning process and should be used by the person facilitating the assessment and planning process.

ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Curriculum. Increasing student participation in the IEP process is a fundamental goal of another innovative self-determination model called the ChoiceMaker Curriculum, formerly known as the Self-Directed IEP (Martin, Huber-Marshall, Maxon, & Jerman, 1993). The ChoiceMaker Curriculum is an 11-step process that promotes the active participation and/or facilitation of the IEP meeting by individual students with disabilities. After receiving direct instruction on each of the 11 steps in the process, students are encouraged to assume a central role during the IEP meeting. The active participation of students during the IEP meeting will increase the likelihood that their expressed

FIGURE 4-2
Steps in the FUTURE Planning Strategy

The strategy is based upon a mnemonic device whereby each letter stands for a step of the strategy. This will help the student remember the steps to the strategy by simply remembering the word.

Step 1: **F** = **Find facts** about yourself related to

- Your strengths.
- Areas you would like to improve.
- Your disability.
- Your legal rights.
- Community resources.
- Post-high-school education options.
- Employment options.
- Other adult roles.

Step 2: **U** = **Understand and value** your

- Dreams.
- Unique differences.
- Rights.
- Ability to take care of yourself.

Step 3: **T** = **Think what is required and tell what is needed** to achieve the goals you have set for yourself for life after high school as a

- Worker.
- Family member.
- Community member.
- Consumer.
- Postsecondary student.
- Other adult roles.

Step 4: **U** = **Use the information to make a plan** that lays out the steps for achieving the goals you have set for yourself for life after high school.

Step 5: **R** = **Reach your goals** through your plan by

- Using community resources.
- Following through on planned actions.
- Asking for reasonable accommodations along the way.

Step 6: **E** = **Evaluate the outcome** of the plan:

- Compare outcomes with expectations.
- Celebrate success.
- Adjust the plan if needed.
- Develop a new plan.

Note. From Begun, W. H. (1995). The FUTURE strategy. In W. H. Begun, L. Minor, B. Silvers, & P. W. Witcher (Eds.), *The TRANS-PLAN Curriculum* (p. 53). DeSoto, KS: DeSoto School District.

interests and goals are taken into serious consideration by the entire IEP team. It is also projected that students who actively participate in developing IEP goals and objectives will assume greater responsibility for implementing them. Assessment activities that could be used in conjunction with the Self-Directed IEP include the following: (1) direct observation of students during the IEP meeting; (2) student self-reports of IEP performance; (3) direct observation of student initiation of IEP goals and objectives; and (4) self-reports of student-initiated IEP goals and objectives.

The Self-Advocacy Strategy. Another popular model for increasing and assessing student participation in the IEP process is The Self-Advocacy Strategy, formerly known as the I PLAN Strategy (Van Reusen, Bos, Schumaker, & Deshler, 1994). The Self-Advocacy Strategy is a seven-step procedure that is designed to promote effective planning and communication for students during their IEP meetings. Like the Self-Directed IEP model discussed earlier, the Self-Advocacy Strategy approach should be taught to students with disabilities in advance of the IEP meeting. An important component of the Self-Advocacy Strategy is the I-PLAN Strategy, which is used to develop the actual IEP. Specific questions that are asked to assess students implementing the Self-Advocacy Strategy through the IEP include the following:

- Did the student **I**nventory his or her strengths, weaknesses, goals, and interests?
- Did the student **P**rovide his/her inventory information?
- Did the student **L**isten and respond during the meeting?
- Did the student **A**sk questions during the meeting?
- Did the student **N**ame his or her goals?

Like the Self-Directed IEP approach, the Self-Advocacy Strategy provides transition assessment personnel with an important context for determining student readiness to exhibit self-determination skills in future IEP meetings and in related community, work, and home settings as well.

Self-Determination Models for Students with Severe Disabilities

The IEP process will be useful for assessing the self-determination skills of some, but not all, students with disabilities. While it can be argued that all students with disabilities have a right to attend and participate in the IEP process, the approaches described earlier in this chapter may be more relevant for students with mild to moderate disabilities than for those with moderate to severe disabilities. In order for transition assessment personnel to examine the self-determination skills of students with moderate to severe disabilities, it will be necessary to examine some of the environments in which these individuals express their independence or self-determined behavior. Brown and his colleagues (1979) referred to "domains of adult functioning," or skill categories where ecological assessments or

inventories can be utilized. The domains include school, domestic, leisure, community, and vocational areas.

A variety of informal assessment strategies can be used to determine a student's level of self-determined behavior within each of these domains. Environmental assessment strategies can be implemented to determine the skills needed to perform independently within each of the domains. Once the skills have been identified, an informal process known as *ecological assessment* can be implemented to ascertain an individual's performance within each domain. Due to the informal nature of this assessment approach, data are often gathered from observations made by employers; supported employment personnel; teachers; adult service providers; and other natural supports such as family members, coworkers, and peers.

IMPACT Curriculum. An assessment model that examines student levels of independent functioning within the domains identified by Brown is known as the IMPACT Curriculum (Neel & Billingsley, 1989). The IMPACT Curriculum is an individualized model that focuses on the development of functional skills that allow individuals with moderate to severe disabilities to have increased control over their lives. Two comprehensive assessment inventories are used in conjunction with the IMPACT approach. The IMPACT Environmental Inventory for the Home and Community can be used to assess three categories of functioning: (1) family make-up and lifestyle; (2) communication patterns and communication methods used by the student; and (3) student response to change, leisure time activities, and student participation in self-help skills.

The second assessment tool that can be used in conjunction with the IMPACT Curriculum is the IMPACT Environmental Inventory for School and Community. This inventory is used to record school and community activities, communication approaches used at school, and other functional activities that are accessible to the student.

A fundamental purpose of self-determination assessment is to promote student independence within school, community, work, and home settings. Students who are able to assume greater responsibility for their actions, academic or otherwise, will stand a much better chance of experiencing the intrinsic rewards that come with increased levels of independence.

SUMMARY

The self-determination initiative represents another major paradigm shift within the field of special education. Until recently, students with disabilities seldom played a significant role in the development, implementation, or evaluation of their own educational goals. Transition assessment that is based on the principle of self-determination will enable the IEP team to create an outcome-oriented document that reflects the personal goals and aspirations of individual students. The long-term intent of self-determination assessment and planning is to ensure that students with disabilities

are capable of making decisions throughout adulthood that are based on what they know to be true about their abilities, interests, preferences, and other life-span considerations. The IEP process provides a valuable opportunity for students with disabilities to learn and implement self-determination skills within the school setting. Assessing self-determination skills in association with the IEP process should be a vital component of transition assessment activities.

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Ward, M. J. (1988). The many facets of self-determination. In National Information Center for Children and Youth with Handicaps (NICHCY), *Transition Summary: Self-Determination, 5,* 2–3.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Aune, E. P., & Ness, J. E. (1991). *Tools for transition: Preparing students with learning disabilities for postsecondary education.* Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.

This curriculum was developed to prepare students with learning disabilities to attend college. The authors include material that will (a) increase students' awareness of their own learning styles, strengths and needs, and learning disabilities; (b) develop study strategies; (c) assist students in determining appropriate accommodations; (d) assist students in determining an understanding of their legal rights; and (e) assist students in learning a process for exploring and accessing career and educational options. The material is written at approximately the eighth grade level. The material is an excellent resource for higher-functioning students planning to go on to college.

Vandercook, T., York, J., & Forest, M. (1989). The McGill Action Planning System (MAPS): A strategy for building the vision. *The Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 14*(3), 205–215.

This planning system is an often used system for person-centered planning with individuals with severe disabilities. The system involves bringing together a group of individuals who care about the person with disabilities for the purpose of future planning. This strategy has been adopted by several states, agencies, and school districts. While it was developed for use with individuals with severe disabilities, it can be used effectively with individuals with mild and/or moderate disabilities.

5

Roles of Key Players

This chapter identifies the key players who can contribute to the transition assessment process for individuals with disabilities. The purpose of the chapter is to

- Identify who should participate in the transition assessment process.
- Present each player's role in the transition assessment process.
- Tell the types of information each stakeholder can provide.

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA), transition planning for students with special needs is to include a "coordinated set of activities for a student designed within an outcome oriented process . . . ." The intent of the law is to ensure that transition planning procedures are conducted as a collaborative effort in which the various stakeholders have shared responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating district-wide transition policies and procedures. This language was included in the 1990 IDEA amendments in part because special educators have historically assumed almost total responsibility for meeting students' educational planning needs even though trained professionals from other fields and other interested persons could have provided important input and assistance.

Like comprehensive transition planning, assessing individuals with disabilities must become a shared responsibility. Assessing student needs, whether they be academic, vocational, or social, has often been the responsibility of a select few. School psychologists, guidance staff, special education teachers, vocational evaluators, and rehabilitation personnel have traditionally been relied upon to collect and interpret assessment data for the purposes of disability classification, special education program placement, and individual educational planning. The types of information gathered for these purposes are often insufficient with respect to the range and types of information needed to promote the student's transition from school to adulthood. Moreover, students with disabilities and their parents traditionally have not been invited to contribute to the assessment process or participate in joint decision making during the educational planning meetings.

WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE AND WHAT INFORMATION CAN THEY PROVIDE?

Formal and informal transition assessment requires collection, examination, and interpretation of information from a variety of settings and from stakeholders relevant to the student's life. Transition assessment is often much more complex than traditional academic or achievement testing. Consequently, information from a wide variety of personnel is often required if the assessment is to be done successfully. The personnel who are discussed in this chapter include (a) students with disabilities; (b) family members; (c) special education teachers; (d) secondary and post-secondary educators; (e) school guidance counselors; (f) adult service providers; (g) employers, work experience staff, job coaches, and placement specialists; (h) support services personnel; and (i) natural supports. The types of information that each key player can contribute as part of the transition assessment process are also highlighted. See Table 5-1 for a list of assessment roles for key stakeholders.

Students with Disabilities

The most important player in the transition assessment process is the student. For too long, students with disabilities have been passive participants in educational planning and assessment activities. Students must become active players within all phases of individualized education program (IEP) planning, from learning how to participate during the IEP conference, to expressing preferences and interests, to assuming responsibility for implementing IEP goals and objectives. Thus, students with disabilities must also be at the center of all transition assessment activities.

Students must become knowledgeable about the purposes of assessment and the federal laws such as IDEA and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that guarantee their rights of participation throughout each phase of assessment. Students also need to understand how assessment data may influence their access to transition services such as educational planning; placement into programs; instructional and curriculum modifications; work experience; and their preparation for transition into community, employment, independent living, leisure, and adult programs. It must also be clear to students that transition assessment is a process that will promote their ability to become self-advocates. Students who are aware of their abilities, preferences, future goals, and instructional needs will be well positioned to express them prior to and during educational planning meetings and with individual teachers and adult service providers after program placement has occurred.

Students with disabilities must provide the context for transition assessment and all related data-gathering activities. They can provide this context by expressing their future goals and aspirations concerning the five adult role domains of employment, postsecondary education, independent

TABLE 5-1
Roles of Key Players

Students with Disabilities	*Family Members*	*Special Education Teachers*	*Secondary and Postsecondary Educators*
• Express independent living needs/abilities • Express course-related interests • Express occupational and job-related interests • Express learning style preferences • Identify personal-social skills in need of improvement • Express leisure/recreation preferences • Identify community involvement interests • Express postsecondary education goals • Express postsecondary employment goals	• Foster independence by assigning specific responsibilities in the home • Explore community support, training, and employment options • Discuss future goals and adult realities with the student • Develop and support a work ethic common to the family culture • Discuss interests, abilities, and needs • Attend and participate in IEP meetings with the student • Support the student's efforts to direct his or her IEP and transition program • Complete parent and family surveys and needs assessments • Encourage the student's efforts to learn more about work demands and career options • Respond to follow-up surveys sent by local school systems • Jointly plan for financial, living, health, leisure, and transportation needs	• Conduct interviews with family members and the student • Conduct situation assessments by observing student performance in a variety of school and community settings • Implement curriculum-based assessment activities • Administer formal assessments • Interpret assessment results gathered from other professionals • Interpret transition assessment data to students and transform it into functional goals and objectives on IEPs	• Provide information about courses 1 year before they teach to students with disabilities • Provide information on course options • Provide information on eligibility and entry skill requirements • Provide information on the teaching style preferences of the instructor • Provide information on testing options • Provide information on evaluation and grading options • Provide information on performance standards and learner outcomes associated with a particular course • Observe and record student performance in class in regard to attendance and safety • Observe and record student performance in cooperative group behavior • Observe and record student performance on tests, quizzes, and project completion • Observe and record student performance on general progress toward exit-level skills and learner outcomes

TABLE 5-1 (continued)

School Guidance Personnel	*Adult Service Providers*	*Employers, Work Experience Staff, Job Coaches, and Placement Specialists*	*Support Services Personnel*
• Administer formal and informal interest surveys as early as possible • Provide postassessment counseling • Assist in helping students express their individual strengths, limitations, and preferences • Assist students in enrolling in secondary school course consistent with their interests, needs, and learning preferences • Provide information for future planning in post-secondary education, employment, military, and/or community options • Participate in the IEP process	• Participate in transition assessment activities when the student is at least 16 years of age • Communicate information about their agencies services to individuals with disabilities • Provide a linkage to the school agencies by collaborating with IEP and assessment teams • Attend IEP meetings with the student and family	• Provide information on entry-level job skills • Provide information on possible workplace accommodation options • Provide information on supported employment options • Provide information on possible apprenticeship options • Provide information on technology skills requirements • Observe and record student's workplace readiness • Observe and record student's ability to follow directions and cooperate with coworkers • Observe and record the student's work ethic, behavior, and productivity level • Observe and record the student's ability to work under supervision and accept criticism • Observe and record the student's job-related interest and motivation	• Participate in the transition assessment process • Provide information on the student's special needs: psychological testing, physical and rehabilitation therapies, and community support services

living, community involvement, and personal-social relationships. After the student has expressed postsecondary goals and aspirations, transition assessment activities must be oriented toward the environments in which the student will function. For example, a student who expresses an interest in attending business courses at a local community college after high school graduation has provided an important context for further assessment activities. First, the student, teacher, and family members must review grades, performance in any business-related work experiences, and performance in any high school business courses. Then, information regarding the community college business courses, enrollment procedures and requirements, academic support services, living accommodations, and financial support must be collected.

For a student with severe disabilities, the family, student, and teacher may decide to investigate recreation opportunities in the community. First, the student and family should be asked to identify activities of interest. Then, the teacher can explore support options available to the student in the community. Once these have been determined, the student should be allowed to try out the recreation activities while receiving the support needed.

The extent of student participation in transition assessment activities depends upon the student and the type of assessment questions being asked. In general, students with disabilities should participate in transition assessment in the following ways:

- Expressing independent living needs/abilities.
- Expressing course-related interests.
- Expressing occupational and job-related interests.
- Expressing learning style preferences.
- Identifying personal-social skills in need of improvement.
- Expressing leisure/recreation preferences.
- Identifying community involvement interests.
- Expressing postsecondary education goals.
- Expressing postsecondary employment goals.

Family Members

Although the student is the most essential player in the transition assessment process, family members should also play an important role in transition assessment and planning activities. Members of the family who can contribute valuable information include parents, brothers, and sisters; extended family members such as aunts and uncles, grandparents; and others regarded as family, such as foster parents, guardians, and close family friends. Family members can offer a unique perspective on a student with disabilities. They often have the most insight regarding the stu-

dent's history, personal strengths and limitations, as well as understanding of the student's self-esteem and other intrapersonal concerns. This can be especially true for students from multicultural and/or diverse backgrounds. Due to the cultural bias of many formal assessment approaches, it is critical that family members be asked to provide information about the student and the culture that cannot be obtained reliably from other sources. Families may also have specific educational goals in mind that are based on cultural beliefs and customs. For students with moderate and severe disabilities, family members are often the foundation of transition planning, and they must be actively involved in the assessment process.

To become active participants in assessment activities, educational planning, and implementation of IEP transition goals, family members must become knowledgeable about specific issues that may impact the family member with disabilities. An awareness of federal and state legislation, for example, will enable the family to advocate for instructional and/or support services that are tied directly to the assessed needs of the student. In addition, family members who understand the full range of school and postsecondary program options can work with the student and other educational planners to advocate for participation in courses and community experiences that best prepare him or her for further education and/or employment in the field of interest.

Clearly, a family that is informed about legal issues, secondary and postsecondary program options, support services, community living, and employment opportunities will be positioned to contribute much to the transition assessment process. Family members can participate further in this process by implementing, observing, and recording the following activities:

- Fostering independence by assigning specific responsibilities in the home.
- Exploring community support, education, and employment options.
- Discussing future goals and adult realities with the student.
- Developing and supporting a work ethic common to the family culture.
- Discussing interests, abilities, and needs.
- Attending and participating in IEP meetings with the student.
- Supporting the student's efforts to direct his or her IEP and transition planning.
- Completing parent and family surveys and needs assessments.
- Encouraging the student's efforts to learn more about work demands and career options.
- Responding to follow-up surveys sent by the local school system.
- Jointly planning for financial, living, health, leisure, and transportation needs.

Family members are in a unique position to assist students in developing a positive attitude about their future. Issues regarding future living arrangements, postsecondary education, employment, community involvement, and personal-social options should be openly discussed among the family members early in the high school years. Because the family may have the greatest influence on the student's perception of self, it is vital that they be supportive of his or her future goals and aspirations. It is equally important that family members encourage and support student decision making and student self-determination so the student can realize his or her goals and aspirations as independently as possible.

Special Education Teachers

The diverse roles that special education teachers can play throughout the transition assessment process can range from gathering assessment data to planning effective instruction and services. An important role many special education teachers assume with respect to transition assessment is that of service coordinator. As service coordinators, special education teachers facilitate the development of student portfolios or other documents providing a broad picture of student performance and skills that can be beneficial to comprehensive transition planning. To conduct transition planning, information from a wide variety of sources must be collected and reviewed. Although there are numerous stakeholders in this process, special education staff, in the role of service coordinators, are often asked to facilitate and organize this effort.

In this role special education staff need to understand what information should be collected, where the information is located, and whom to contact to gather the data. For example, special educators should identify the range of pertinent information that is available from personnel within the school and that which is available from family members and community sources. Special education personnel must also collaborate with the various stakeholders to ensure that they understand the transition assessment process and how data they provide can assist in the delivery of transition services.

Special education teachers need to be able to conduct certain types of assessment activities to complement data collected from other sources. A sample of transition assessment activities that are appropriate for special educators include the following:

1. Conducting interviews with family members and the student.
2. Conducting situational assessments by observing student performance in a variety of school and community settings.
3. Implementing curriculum-based assessment activities.
4. Administering formal assessments.
5. Interpreting assessment results gathered from other professionals.

6. Interpreting transition assessment data to students and transforming it into functional goals and objectives on IEPs.

Another important role that special educators can play in the assessment process is preparing students to participate in assessment activities and helping them understand the results of various assessments. Students must be made fully aware of the reasons for assessment activities, the people who will be involved in the process, and how assessment data can assist in educational planning for their future. Issues related to self-determination need to be addressed throughout the assessment process and in advance of any and all IEP meetings. This will ensure that many students are prepared to express their interests, preferences, skills, needs, and long-term goals in conjunction with planning activities. For students with more severe disabilities, special educators must assist parents and students in understanding assessment results and planning activities that contribute to identifying vocational and community living options.

Collaborating with families is yet another important role of special education instructors. Special education teachers can provide family members with information that enables them to become active participants in the transition assessment process. Information that special education teachers can share with family members includes (a) legal rights and responsibilities, (b) school support services, (c) work experience opportunities, (d) adult support services, and (e) postsecondary education and employment options. Family members who are made aware of the full continuum of available programs and support service options will be more likely to support decisions that are based on the needs and realistic aspirations of the student.

Secondary and Postsecondary Educators

For many students with disabilities, regular and vocational/technical education is one of the critical links between the public school experience and the world of work. Secondary and postsecondary regular and vocational educators can assist in creating meaningful linkages between school and work by providing information about the courses they teach to special educators, students, and family members at least 1 year before the student qualifies to enroll in such courses. Course-related information that can be gathered as part of transition assessment procedures includes (a) course options, (b) eligibility and entry-level skill requirements, (c) teaching style preferences of the instructor, (d) testing options, (e) evaluation and grading options, and (f) performance standards and learner outcomes associated with particular courses. Information of this type will be of maximum use if it is collected and shared well in advance of any placement decisions. This will allow students the time to advocate for enrollment in courses that are consistent with their interests, preferences, and abilities.

Increasing access to regular and vocational education for students with disabilities is an important goal of transition assessment activities. Once stu-

dents are enrolled in appropriate courses, however, it will be necessary to gather information about their performance within the regular and vocational education setting. Regular and vocational educators can observe and document student performance related to attendance, safety, cooperative group behavior, test and quiz scores, project completion, and general progress toward exit-level skills and learner outcomes. In addition to monitoring student performance within the classroom or lab, regular and vocational educators must communicate their observations to special education personnel or support staff who are responsible for coordinating instructional support services for students. Regular educators, vocational educators, special educators, and support staff can then work in collaboration with the student to determine whether modifications to the curriculum or adaptations to instructional services are needed.

Curriculum information will enable the transition assessment planners to identify which skills a student needs in order to enter a particular program, which entry-level skills are or are not currently possessed by the student, and which skills should be prioritized on the IEP for immediate instruction by special educators and/or regular educators.

It is important to collect curriculum and instructional information as part of the transition assessment process. These types of data can be most efficiently gathered by face-to-face interactions between special education staff and regular educators. A procedure that can be used to record information of this type is called a *program inventory*. It is highly recommended that program inventories be completed for all regular and vocational courses available within the district. A sample program inventory form is provided in Appendix E.

School Guidance Personnel

School guidance and counseling personnel have a long history of providing routine assessment services for students leaving the school system and entering postsecondary training and/or employment settings. However, the extent of assessment services that counselors have provided for individuals with disabilities has varied greatly from district to district. This may be due, in part, to a fundamental lack of understanding about the assessment needs of individuals with disabilities and the role that guidance personnel can play in accommodating these needs.

School guidance personnel can assist in the transition assessment process by assessing the occupational interests and vocational abilities of students at various times. Some students should have their interests identified while in middle school and before decisions are made regarding high school course placement. School guidance staff can administer formal and informal interest surveys to students with disabilities at this juncture and then provide postassessment counseling so students can learn to understand and express their individual strengths, limitations, and preferences. Guidance

staff should also assist students in enrolling in high school courses that are consistent with their interests, needs, and learning preferences. For students with more severe disabilities, guidance personnel can participate in interviews with parents and other family members to determine the student's interests, functional skill needs, and community support options.

To help prepare students for adult life, guidance personnel can once again examine occupational interests, abilities, and preferences. While discussing the assessment results with individual students, guidance staff can promote planning for the future by providing information about postsecondary educational, employment, military, and/or other community options that are consistent with transition assessment data. Guidance staff can also refer students to other vocational evaluators and/or adult service providers, such as vocational rehabilitation agencies, if additional assessment information is needed. Like other stakeholders in transition assessment, guidance personnel need to be active participants in all phases of the IEP process. This will ensure that the information collected by guidance staff is communicated to all of the IEP participants and that the data are taken into consideration during the educational planning process.

Adult Service Providers

Adult service providers such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Service, Job Training Partnership Agencies, and postsecondary schools play an integral role in the school-to-postsecondary-setting transition process. Before a student can make realistic decisions about education or employment pursuits after high school, the continuum of adult service options must be fully explored. For this reason, IDEA requires a statement of interagency linkages to be included on IEPs of students before they reach 16 years of age if deemed appropriate by the IEP team. Before a statement of interagency linkage can be written into the IEP, adult service providers must be involved in the transition assessment process, and they need to communicate information regarding their agency to the transition assessment planners.

The number and types of adult support service options are often determined by the general location of the school. Typically, schools that are located near an urban community have access to a greater number of adult support services than school districts in rural areas. Nevertheless, it is necessary for both urban and rural schools to establish meaningful interagency linkages as a result of comprehensive assessment activities.

Although the number of adult support options may be influenced by location, there are many important contributions adult service providers can make that will assist students with disabilities in making successful school-to-adult-life transitions in either urban or rural communities. First, adult service providers should be invited to be members of the transition assessment and the IEP teams. As team members, adult service providers will have a forum to share information about their agencies with other

stakeholders. Students, family members, special education staff, and other members of the transition assessment or IEP teams can be given information about agency services such as assessment/evaluation services, eligibility requirements, job coaching and job placement assistance, financial supports, and independent living options. It is critical that team members understand the continuum of adult support options available to students with disabilities in the local community. Once this information has been shared, transition assessment planners can coordinate meaningful linkages between individual students and appropriate adult service agencies.

Employers, Work Experience Staff, Job Coaches, and Placement Specialists

Although some students with disabilities will make the transition from secondary schools to postsecondary educational settings and then to employment, others will move into competitive or supported employment positions immediately after high school. Ideally, these students will enter the job market with the entry-level skills they need to be employed successfully. Unfortunately, numerous studies have shown that students with disabilities often leave the public schools underprepared for immediate entry into the labor force. The transition assessment process should provide a forum for employers to communicate information about their businesses or industries to school personnel. This will enable transition assessment planners to develop and implement educational plans that target the entry-level job skills and work behaviors required by local employers.

As assessment team members, employers can contribute job-related information that will help facilitate the development of IEP/transition plans. Employers can identify what skills the student needs to acquire in order to obtain a particular job. They can also make recommendations as to how the school can assist the student in learning the entry-level job skills. In addition, employers and school personnel such as work experience coordinators, job coaches, and job placement staff are in a unique position to observe and assess students in community work settings. Students who are participating in work experience programs, vocational cooperative education programs, or apprenticeships can have their work behavior assessed by employers and school staff through direct observation at the job site.

To facilitate effective school-to-work transition planning, assessment personnel must seek out employers to provide essential job-related information. The types of information employers can provide may include the following:

- Entry level job skills.
- Workplace accommodation options.
- Supported employment options.
- Apprenticeship options.
- Technology skills requirements.
- Environmental work conditions.

Employers, work experience staff, job coaches, and job placement specialists can also provide information to educational planners about students' on-the-job performance. Worker-related information that can be recorded by employers and other work staff may include the following:

- Workplace readiness skills.
- Ability to follow directions.
- Coworker relationships.
- Productivity levels.
- Job-related interests.
- Work ethics and behavior.
- Acceptance of criticism/supervision.

Support Services Personnel

Support services staff such as school psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, consultants, speech and hearing therapists, and social workers are also stakeholders in the transition assessment process. Support staff often provide a wide range of supports to students with disabilities. Psychological testing results, physical and occupational therapy screening data, and other social or family information must become part of the transition assessment data base. Information that is collected as a result of support staff assessment and screening should be shared with IEP and transition assessment team members. This will ensure that appropriate support services are indicated on IEPs and that services are provided as needed.

Support services staff can also provide information that will impact the overall school-to-adult-life transition planning process for students with disabilities. In many cases, students receiving support services in the secondary school setting will need continued support services in postsecondary settings. A student, for example, who is receiving taped textbook services in high school due to a visual disability or a significant reading deficit will need to receive compatible accommodations in postsecondary educational and/or work settings. In cases such as these, support services staff can assist in matching student needs to specific supports or workplace accommodations that will be required in future settings.

Natural Supports

While the stakeholders mentioned in this chapter can play important roles with respect to the transition assessment process, other people such as student peers, coworkers, and friends can also provide helpful information to the individual with disabilities and to the transition assessment team. These persons are regarded as "natural supports" because they live, attend school, and work in the same settings as the individuals with disabilities.

Consequently, they can often provide support within the context of natural environments at school, at work, and in the community.

Student peers, friends, and coworkers can be asked to make observations about persons with disabilities within these natural environments. Observational information that should be collected and shared with transition assessment personnel may include the following:

- Leisure and recreation issues and concerns.
- Changes in occupational interests.
- Need for ongoing or modified assistive technology.
- Ability to solve educational and/or workplace problems.
- Social skill needs and abilities.
- Job development needs and skills.
- Job training needs and skills.
- Interaction skills with teachers and employers.

SUMMARY

This chapter identified the key players in the transition assessment process and outlined the types of information that each key player could contribute and the various ways in which the information could be used to promote effective transition planning for students with disabilities. A fundamental outcome of transition assessment activities is to ensure that students with disabilities are able to participate as fully as possible in the postsecondary and adult settings of their choice. This outcome will be realized by more students if each and every stakeholder fully participates as a team member in transition assessment activities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Books

Albright, L., & Cobb, R. (1988). *Trainer's manual: Assessment of students with handicaps in vocational education: A curriculum-based approach.* Alexandria, VA: American Vocational Association.

This manual provides a thorough overview of the curriculum-based vocational assessment (CBVA) process. It consists of seven modules that are designed to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities in vocational education programs. It also describes the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders within the CBVA process. A variety of data collection forms and formats are included for consumer use. The manual can be purchased by contacting the American Vocational Association in Alexandria, Virginia.

Gavin, M. K., Gugerty, J. J., Hazelkorn, M. N., Kellogg, A., Lombard, R. C., & Warden, R. (1993). *Designated vocational instruction: A resource and planning guide.* Madison: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

This planning guide provides a wealth of information regarding the roles of key stakeholders in the transition assessment process. Numerous surveys, questionnaires, and interview formats are included for use within school, community, work, and home settings. The guide is available from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Madison.

Isaacson, L. E. (1986). *Career information in counseling and career development* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

This text provides a complete description of the counselor role in career development and assessment. The book will serve as an excellent resource for those interested in understanding the assessment procedures and methods often utilized by school guidance personnel.

Nisbet, J. (1992). *Natural supports in school, at work, and in the community for people with severe disabilities.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

This book focuses on the continuum of natural supports pertaining to individuals with severe disabilities. Strategies for assessing natural supports within school, employment, and community settings are provided. Information regarding the roles of family members is also included.

Organizations

Children's Defense Fund
122 C Street NW • Suite 400
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 628-8787 or (800) 424-9602

The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 20191
(703) 620-3660

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)
Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013-1492
(800) 695-0285

Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center
228 South Pitt Street • Room 300
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 836-2953

PACER Center (Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights)
4826 Chicago Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55417
(612) 827-2966

6

Methods of Gathering Information

This chapter provides an overview of methods that practitioners can use to collect assessment data throughout the transition planning process. The goals are

- To describe methods of assessing individuals.
- To describe methods of assessing future living, working, and educational environments.

The move to identify postsecondary goals requires professionals, students with disabilities, and their families to renew their efforts concerning effective assessment practices and to view assessment as an ongoing process. However, this does not mean that new methods and models of assessment are needed to facilitate transition planning. Rather, it is necessary to determine what methods of assessment are needed at various transition points for individuals with disabilities to make appropriate placement and planning decisions. There is a wealth of information in the general education, special education, rehabilitation, and vocational education literature on methods and models of assessment that identify instructional, vocational, community, independent living, and social/personal strengths and needs of individuals with disabilities.

Transition assessment does require professionals to think beyond commonly used assessment practices such as paper and pencil tests and to move toward conducting assessments in actual life contexts such as job sites, the community, and independent living situations. The move toward more authentic assessment is also evident in education settings in terms of performance-based assessment and outcome-based measurement. The transition assessment process should focus on deciding what type of assessment data to collect, who will collect the data, and how the results will be used. Assessment data must come from many sources and be updated periodically to ensure that students' transition goals are appropriate and realistic. Most important, the results of the assessment process must be used to develop realistic transition goals during the IEP process.

Transition assessment is an ongoing process that takes place during the middle and high school years. This process may need to be continued throughout the adult years for some individuals with disabilities. Data should be collected that will lead to appropriate postsecondary goals in the areas of employment, community involvement, independent living, postsecondary education, and personal and social relationships. There are several principles that can be used to guide the selection of methods and how the information gathered during the assessment process is used. These principles are adapted from the Interdisciplinary Council on Vocational Evaluation/Assessment (Smith et al., 1994). They include the following:

- A variety of methods should be used to provide accurate assessment. A broad range of questions must be posed to determine what makes an individual's abilities and needs unique.
- Assessment information should be verified by using different methods.
- Behavioral observation is essential in the assessment process. Behavioral observation (e.g., observing physical performance, social characteristics, interactions with people and other aspects of the environment) occurs throughout the assessment process. The observation process can be informal or formal, can occur in a variety of environments, and should be made by a variety of people.
- Assessment requires a collaborative approach to data collection and decision making. Assessment requires the collection of input from a variety of individuals and requires an understanding of how to use the results of the assessment process. Special educators, regular educators, vocational educators, guidance counselors, families, and other personnel already possess much of this vital information.

This chapter provides an overview of methods that can be used in transition assessment. Each method is briefly described along with a discussion of the types of information that can be collected using that method. Chapter 7 provides a framework for using the information to match an individual with appropriate environments and for identifying accommodations and supports the individual will need in a specific environment.

METHODS OF GATHERING INFORMATION ON THE INDIVIDUAL

This section presents an overview of basic methods of gathering information on the individual that can be used as you assist the student in planning for the transition from school to all aspects of adult life. It begins with the methods that are most removed from actual adult environments in which the individual will build his or her life and ends with situational assessment that focuses on collecting information as individuals live, work, and study in environments as close as possible to those in which they will participate as adults. The methods covered are (a) analysis of background information, (b) interviews, (c) psychometric tests, (d) work samples, (e) curriculum-based assessment techniques, (f) behavioral observation, and (g) situational assessment.

Analysis of Background Information

One of the first sources of information about the student should be previous records, which contain observations of previous teachers, support staff, and staff from other agencies (e.g., Mental Health or Vocational Rehabilitation) who have worked with the individual. In addition to the cumulative folder, there are often other records kept by teachers or other support staff who have worked with the student. Often these other records have more useful information than the official student files. Be sure that you also review past individualized education programs (IEPs), with particular emphasis on transition-related objectives and activities contained in them. Also ask for any additional formal and informal assessments that have been conducted with the student. Although all of this information should be in the student's official files, this often is not the case. If other youth and adult service agencies have been working with the individual, ask whether you can also review their information after receiving appropriate releases of information from the family or the individual.

The increasing use of student portfolios will provide valuable information that has been selected by the student and staff as representative of his or her interests, goals, and finest work. In fact, a transition portfolio is an excellent means of organizing and summarizing all of the transition assessment and transition planning activities in which the student has participated. These and other existing records often contain a wealth of information on the strengths and interests of the individual, as well as the areas on which the individual needs to focus. This information may be in the form of formal and informal assessment results, comments of previous teachers, guidance counselors, and other support staff and adult service providers, and records of IEP meetings. The records may also contain information on the experiences the individual has had in the community related to living and employment, and the techniques and approaches that have worked (or not worked) with the individual in the past. In addition, they may contain information on health-related issues. If transition planning activities have been conducted with the student in previous years, it is enlightening to review the trends in the student's expressed interests and preferences over these years.

It is important to remember in reviewing records, however, that individuals may react differently to new teachers and to new classroom environments or new living or work environments. They may enter these environments with a changed attitude. Thus, while you should consider previous information, take time to form opinions based on your own observations and experiences with the student, as well as his or her self-reports.

Interviews

Interviews with the student, family members, former teachers, friends, counselors, other support staff, and former employers may be one of the

best sources of information on how the individual functions in the real world and what he or she would like to do as an adult. Interviews of people who know students well can uncover rich information. For example, when students' parents and siblings are interviewed regarding students' residential living plans or long-range social and personal relationship goals, the results of the interviews often conflict. Frequently, brothers and sisters of students have more realistic and accurate information than their parents about their siblings' long-term goals, social and personal aspirations, and abilities. Siblings are major stakeholders in the students' transition, since they may one day assume responsibility for their brothers and sisters who have disabilities.

Interviewers may follow a structured format or improvise as the interview is proceeding. To make the best use of the interview process and obtain consistent information across interviews, however, you should follow the steps listed below:

1. Come prepared with a set of specific questions.
2. Be flexible in following up on a specific question and obtaining clarifying or additional information. Always return, however, to your basic list of questions.
3. Conduct the interview in person, if possible, so that you can pick up on subtle cues from the person being interviewed, such as facial expressions and shifts in body posture.
4. Make the purpose of the interview clear and assure the interviewee that *there are no right or wrong answers.*
5. Make the person as comfortable as possible. It may be a good idea to provide the person with a copy of the questions before the actual interview, especially if some of the questions require recall of specific facts or events from the past.
6. Write down enough information during the interview so you can remember the individual's responses. *Take time right after the interview to complete your notes.*
7. Try not to lead the person or insert your own personal biases or responses into the questions. Allow the person enough time to organize the answer before speaking. Also allow the person to respond as thoroughly as he or she chooses to a specific question.

The interview process is one of the most useful in gathering relevant information on how the student has functioned in real-life situations and in determining the goals the student and family have related to adult life. It does not require reading or writing on the part of the person being interviewed. It also allows you to clarify any responses that you do not understand, pursue answers to incomplete responses, and verify or validate information collected through other methods.

A wide range of information can be gathered through the interview process. The strength of this process is that it provides information on what is actually happening *now* in the individual's life, what has happened in the *past*, and what the interviewee would like to see happen in the *future*. This information can include such areas as the responsibilities the individual assumes at home related to daily life skills, friendships, activities the individual enjoys, odd jobs the student has held, and academic subjects in which the student excels. The interview process can also uncover the goals that the individual has in the areas of living, working, and postsecondary education, and how these goals relate to those held by the individual's family.

While interviews may provide a great deal of information, there are some drawbacks to this technique. First, it can be time consuming, both in terms of arranging the interviews and actually collecting the information. Second, if you do not enter the interview with a specific set of questions and keep the interview focused on these questions, you may not gather the information you set out to gather. Finally, the person being interviewed may feel intimidated and may provide responses he or she feels you want to hear.

Psychometric Tests

Psychometric tests are farther removed from tasks required in the real world than most of the other techniques presented in this chapter. These instruments (often called paper and pencil tests) are often standardized tests that are available from commercial publishers. Many of these tests have been formally field tested with sample groups, and they often include a norm group with which the individual is compared. Other psychometric tests are criterion-referenced and provide information on how the individual has performed related to specific content areas of the test, such as budgeting, health, or job-seeking skills. Examples include tests of academic achievement, vocational interest, functional living skills, self-concept, learning styles, and vocational aptitude. Although some of these tests must be administered by individuals formally trained in test administration and interpretation, there are a number of tests that can be administered by the classroom teacher. Other sources (Clark, 1996; Corbey, Miller, Severson, & Enderle, 1993) have summarized the major psychometric tests related to the major areas of transition. A chart containing the major tests available is also included in Appendix A.

If you choose to use psychometric tests as one method of gathering information on the student, there are some questions you should ask yourself.

1. Will the content and format of the results be helpful to you, the student, and others working with the student?
2. Does the test manual provide information on its reliability (how consistent it is) and its validity (whether it measures what it says it measures)? Is the test reliable and valid?

3. If the test is one that compares the results to the performance of others (a norming group), is the norming group one to whom you want to compare your students?
4. Will the student be able to read the questions? If not can they be read to him or her?
5. Will the student understand the questions, and do the responses have a reasonable chance of reflecting the student's knowledge or feelings?
6. Does the student have enough experience to relate to the situations presented in the test?

When many people think of assessment, they think mainly of these formal instruments. The advantage of this approach is that it provides an official-looking score and a standardized method of gathering specific information. Like any of the other techniques described in this chapter, psychometric tests should not be used as the *only* method of gathering the information you need to assist the student and family in transition planning. These tests, however, can provide information on the academic functioning level of the student, including the areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. Many professionals use these instruments as a starting point to plan other assessment activities or to engage in discussion with the student.

Psychometric tests can also provide information on the *knowledge* level of the student related to functional living areas (e.g., managing money, maintaining a home, shopping) and to specific occupations or occupational clusters. However, they do *not* provide information on how well the individual applies this knowledge in real-life situations. The ability of the student to perform well on these instruments depends not only on knowledge, but also on the amount of experience the student has had with the situations presented in the test.

Work Samples

Work sampling is defined as a "work activity involving tasks, materials, and tools which are identical or similar to those in an actual job or cluster of jobs" (Fry & Botterbusch, 1988 as cited in Dowd, 1993, p. 12). Work samples can be used to assess an individual's interests, abilities, and worker (social/personal) characteristics. The key to administering work samples is that the practitioner observe and document information concerning level of interest, attention to task, and requests for assistance or clarification in addition to the individual's actual performance of the task. Work samples often provide a direct link to occupational information since they replicate some aspect of vocational education or employment. Samples of daily activities can also replicate aspects of independent living.

Work samples generally fall into two categories: commercially made and locally developed or homemade. Commercial work samples are generally

found in vocational evaluation units in school systems or rehabilitation facilities. Examples of commercial work samples include Vocational Information and Evaluation Samples (VIEWS); Vocational Interest, Temperament, and Aptitude System (VITAS); Talent Assessment Program (TAP); Valpar; and MICRO-Tower. Much has been written about the advantages and disadvantages of using commercial work samples for individuals with disabilities (Brown, McDaniel, & Couch, 1994; Pruitt, 1986). In brief, commercial work samples come with standardized directions, tasks, materials, scoring procedures, and norms that enhance administration procedures. These work samples tend to emphasize psychomotor skills rather than verbal ability. Work samples tend to be expensive to purchase (anywhere from several hundred dollars to several thousand dollars). Some work samples are focused on production and do not replicate work directly; therefore, some students may still have the feeling that they are taking a test. Work samples can also become dated quickly and not reflect work tasks in the employment sector. Finally, for individuals with physical or severe disabilities, work samples may indicate what they cannot do as opposed to what they can do if they are given appropriate training and support to learn a task.

Locally developed or homemade work samples are generally developed by a teacher or vocational evaluator. These work samples can be developed on the basis of local job analyses, tasks in vocational education programs, or as part of the classroom career exploration process.

For example, a special education teacher could develop a work sample for individuals to make corsages from plastic or real flowers. Students would select floral designs from appropriate books and follow predetermined directions to assemble their project. Key behaviors the teacher might observe include level of student interest, eye-hand coordination, attention to detail, artistic ability, and attention span. Follow-up activities may include a visit to a horticulture program within the school system or to a local florist. Information concerning job opportunities, pay, and training needed could be obtained from the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* or from a state occupational information system.

Work samples generally have a standard set of directions, tasks, materials, and key behaviors to observe. Rehabilitation Resource (formerly The Materials Development Center), at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, has developed a manual for practitioners to follow when developing and administering informal work samples. (See the additional resources list at the end of this chapter.) Homemade work samples can also be found within vocational evaluation units and tend to sample tasks found in vocational programs or jobs specific to the local community. These samples tend to have high face validity, since individuals can see and think about actual work.

For example, students may take apart, clean, and put together a carburetor. Key behaviors to observe might include level of interest, spatial rela-

tionships, problem-solving strategies, attention to task, memory, eye-hand coordination, and finger dexterity. For students who are interested and do well at the task, follow-up activities might include spending time in the auto mechanics program to observe other activities or inquire about future job possibilities with an auto mechanic in the community.

Developing informal work samples can be time consuming and costly for some practitioners. It is important to weigh the benefits and limitations of using work samples as opposed to placing students in actual sites (situational assessments) to perform similar tasks. Not all work samples need to be researched and structured; rather, teachers and others can develop work tasks that may serve primarily as exploratory experiences.

Curriculum-Based Assessment Techniques

One of the major thrusts in the field of education is toward curriculum-based assessment. This is assessment precisely based on what a student has been taught within a curriculum. Salvia and Hughes (1990) listed the following eight steps in the curriculum-based assessment approach (CBA):

1. Specify the reasons for the assessment.
2. Analyze the curriculum.
3. Formulate behavioral objectives.
4. Develop appropriate assessment procedures.
5. Collect data.
6. Summarize the data.
7. Display the data.
8. Interpret the data and make decisions.

Curriculum-based assessment is really an *approach* rather than one specific method. This approach is included here, however, because it is often viewed as a specific assessment technique and is being used increasingly in content-area classes such as math and English, as well as in vocational education programs. Curriculum-based assessment instruments are developed by the teacher or other staff and focus specifically on the content being taught. They can include any of the methods already discussed in this chapter, such as behavioral observations and paper and pencil tests. Examples of other curriculum-based assessment techniques include criterion-referenced testing, portfolio assessment, and curriculum-based measurement.

Each of these approaches will be discussed in the following paragraphs. They can be used to gather information related to planning for future living, working, or educational environments. The criterion-referenced testing approach compares the individual's performance to a pre-established level of performance (e.g., 80%), rather than to the performance of others

or to a set of norms. In this approach the emphasis is on the knowledge or skills needed for a specific content area and whether the individual has demonstrated mastery of this knowledge. Results of the assessment would indicate, for example, that a student scored 70% on two-digit by one-digit multiplication problems and 40% on two-digit by two-digit multiplication. The criterion-referenced testing approach is used primarily in academic areas, but it can be used in any content area in which skills can be broken down into specific subareas.

Curriculum-based measurement is an ongoing assessment approach that was developed by individuals at the University of Minnesota. It consists of a specific set of assessment techniques for the areas of reading, written expression, spelling, and math. This approach uses the concept of units correct per minute to measure the student's performance in the specific content area. Initial probes are taken from the beginning, middle, and end of the instructional content, and additional probes of the student's performance are taken at least twice weekly throughout the instructional period. The student's performance is graphed on an ongoing basis, and instruction is modified based upon the student's progress toward established goals. For more information on curriculum-based measurement, consult Marston and Magnusson (1985) and Shinn (1989).

The concept of portfolio assessment has been in use in the fine arts area for a number of years, as well as in vocational programs such as architecture, drafting, and graphic arts. As the emphasis in assessment moves toward the concept of "authentic assessment," portfolios are being developed in a number of content areas and across content areas. The major steps in portfolio assessment are as follows:

1. Describe the curricular area.
2. Identify the overall goals of the portfolio.
3. Delineate the portfolio format and the type of materials to be included.
4. Describe procedures for evaluating the work in the portfolio, such as student conferences and teacher review of the material.
5. Describe how the contents of the portfolio will be summarized.

The types of materials to be included in the portfolio can range from the results of vocational interest tests, to essays written by the student concerning his or her goals, to samples of projects from English class or architectural drafting. This approach is an excellent method of compiling and summarizing all of the transition assessment activities of the student. In using this method, it is critical that the student have input into the types of materials to be included in the portfolio and that the guidelines that have been established be followed. A portfolio with everything the student has completed will be difficult to evaluate and does not truly represent the student's abilities, interests, and preferences. It is also important that the material in the portfolio be evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment. One of the applications of the curriculum-based assessment approach is curriculum-based vocational assessment (CBVA). This is a process for determining the student's career development, vocational, and transition-related needs based upon his or her ongoing performance within existing course content. For the specific application of CBVA, the target is usually performance in vocational education courses and in work experience sites in the school or community, although important information can also be gathered from performance in academic classes. This process not only allows you to collect information on the student's performance in a setting close to real life, it also allows you to determine the support that the student will need to succeed in vocational education classes or on the job. Albright and Cobb (1988b) identified three general phases in the CBVA process:

1. Assessment during program placement and planning. This includes activities prior to and during the first few weeks of the student's participation in a vocational program. Information gathered during this phase assists in program selection, program placement, and program planning.
2. Assessment during participation in a vocational program. These activities monitor the student's program, determine the appropriateness of the program and the service delivery plan, and evaluate the success of the student's program.
3. Assessment during program exiting. Assessment activities in this phase occur near the end of the student's program and immediately following completion of the student's program. Information gathered in this phase assists the team in identifying the special services needed to help the student make a successful transition into employment and/or postsecondary education and the best program(s) for the student.

For more information on CBVA, consult Albright and Cobb (1988a, b), and Stodden, Ianacone, Boone, and Bisconer (1987).

Advantages and Disadvantages of Curriculum-Based Assessment. Since the curriculum-based assessment approaches are tied directly to the student's performance in the content being studied, a great deal of information can be gathered through this approach. In addition, curriculum-based assessment is often done naturally by teachers; all that is needed to make this assessment more effective is to pay more attention to the structure of the assessment and to record the results so that others can use them.

If the student is in vocational education classes or work experiences in the community, information can be gathered on how well the individual actually performs tasks related to specific occupations. The student can also determine whether he or she is interested in the specific vocational area. In addition, information can be gathered on how well the individual relates to others, including peers and supervisors, and on such areas as working independently, staying on task, and asking for assistance when needed.

Curriculum-based assessment is also becoming a major emphasis within academic content area courses. This presents an ideal opportunity to gather information on the individual across a variety of instructional settings. If data are gathered on the student's performance in academic classes, information can be gathered on basic academic skills, how the student learns best, and the student's work habits, preferences and values, and attitudes. The specific academic areas in which the student is interested and in which he or she excels can also be identified. The curriculum-based assessment approach can provide information on the student's performance and/or knowledge of skills related to daily living, such as managing a checking account, negotiating with authority figures, doing laundry, and preparing meals. Finally, this approach can provide information on the student's interests and skills in leisure time activities.

Curriculum-based assessment approaches provide the information needed to make appropriate curriculum and instructional modifications. This approach is also one of the best methods of determining the amount of support the student needs in a specific course or program. What better way of determining the support needed than by involving the student in the program and identifying the supports at that time?

Behavioral Observation

Observing and recording individual behavior in a variety of work and community settings over time should provide the foundation for transition assessment. Observing individual behavior is a key component of the methods described in this section. Dowd (1993) defined an *observation procedure* as "an organized method of observing and objectively recording the behavior of an individual for the purpose of documenting this behavior. The emphasis is usually upon productivity, behavior patterns, expressed interest, and interpersonal interaction" (p. 20).

For information to be useful, behavior observation should be systematic and should take place in a variety of settings. It is also helpful to have different team members observe the same individual in various situations to make sure the information gathered is valid and reliable. There are a number of different techniques that practitioners can use to observe and record behavior including narrative recording, time sampling, event recording, and rating scales. The following explanations show how simple these techniques can be to use.

Narrative recording involves a running record of the individual's behavior in a specific situation. For example, you have placed a student in a job site in the school for the purpose of career exploration and to get an in-depth look at a variety of behaviors. By keeping a narrative record, you can record specific skills the individual demonstrates, the types of directions the individual responds to best, social interactions, and personal appearance. While narrative recording is time consuming, it does provide an

opportunity for practitioners to identify specific behaviors and/or tasks that may need more attention or to determine that the individual performs well in a specific situation. A possible problem with this technique is that it is subjective and depends on the skill of the practitioner.

Time sampling or *interval recording* requires that practitioners observe and record behavior at specific intervals. This technique is helpful if the practitioner has an idea of the problem behavior (or skill deficit) and needs to document frequency and duration. A disadvantage to time sampling is that it does not reflect the frequency of behaviors on an ongoing basis. It may also under- or overestimate the frequency of the behavior. Students should also be asked to give feedback concerning their perceptions of the problem behavior.

Event sampling requires the practitioner to wait for a specific behavior to appear and then record the frequency and duration. For example, you have placed a student at a community-based job site and her supervisor reports that she frequently talks to coworkers and disrupts their work. You collect data on this behavior over a 3-day period including (a) frequency, or the number of times the behavior occurs; (b) duration, or how long the behavior lasts; and (c) the intensity of the behavior. This information can then be used to talk with the individual about the behavior and develop some type of intervention plan. Practitioners may miss the opportunity to record other key behaviors when using event sampling.

The use of *rating scales* provides a more structured technique to observe and record behavior. Rating scales identify a set of predetermined behaviors (e.g., skill level, social skills, personal skills, interest level), and practitioners then rate the individual's behavior in some manner (e.g., acceptable/unacceptable/needs improvement, on a 5-point scale). Rating scales can be developed locally or obtained from books, manuals, and other assessment materials. Rating scales can save practitioners valuable time, especially when observing a number of individuals in similar situations. For example, the practitioner uses the same rating scale to determine whether students can successfully use public transportation to the local recreation center. The rating scale includes such items as (a) identifies the appropriate bus, (b) states what the time bus leaves according to the schedule, (c) carries appropriate money for a roundtrip ticket, and (d) identifies the location of the bus pick-up and drop-off. Students can also be asked to rate themselves and provide additional feedback on specific target behaviors.

There are several cautions to note when using rating scales. Some practitioners will limit their observations only to those identified on the scale. The actual items selected for the rating scale need to be relevant to specific situations and are dependent on the process and people that developed the scale. Finally, some people tend to rate individuals as being "in the middle" when using rating scales; therefore, it is necessary to understand the importance of the items on the scale and to observe individuals for enough time that you are confident about your rating.

Situational Assessment

Situational assessment is the systematic observation process for evaluating behaviors in controlled or semicontrolled environments (Dowd, 1993). The demands of the environment (e.g., work tasks, independent living tasks, community functioning skills) can be varied while recording behaviors such as interest, actual skill level, use of materials, and social interactions. Situational assessments can be a valid and reliable source of data if the sites are systematically developed (e.g., uniform tasks a student will do, amount of time, supervision responsibilities) and if practitioners systematically record behaviors during the assessment process. The data collected then can be used in planning and placement decisions concerning further situational assessment sites, types of programs to consider for placement, and instructional/social accommodations needed in specific situations.

Situational Assessment in Vocational Settings. Situational assessment can be used to collect data on students' interests, abilities, social/interpersonal skills, and accommodations/needs in school-based work sites, community-based work sites, and vocational education programs. The following examples illustrate several situational assessment sites:

> A 10th-grade student has repeatedly expressed an interest in enrolling in a welding program. The teacher arranges for the individual to spend a week in a vocational education welding program to determine interest level, ability to follow safety rules, ability to use the equipment and tools required in the program, interactions with the instructor and other students, and what (if any) instructional and/or equipment accommodations would be needed. Both the welding instructor and the transition teacher agree to collect narrative data on a daily basis in addition to using a competency-based checklist of tasks the individual completed while in the program. At the end of the assessment, the instructor, teacher, and student discuss whether this is a realistic placement option and/or postsecondary employment goal for the student.

> An eighth-grade student is placed in the library for an in-school work situational assessment. The purpose of the assessment is for career exploration and observation of the individual's work and social skills. The librarian and teacher determine that the student will check out books, return books to shelves, and repair torn and damaged books. The special education teacher observes the student's social interactions at the check-out desk, ability to catalog books alphabetically and numerically, and ability to work independently repairing books on an intermittent basis over 3 weeks. The librarian agrees to supplement these data with information concerning the student's interest level, attention to task, and social interaction. At the end of the situational assessment, the librarian, teacher and student discuss the student's strengths, needs, and interests noted throughout the assessment. Additional in-school work sites are then discussed to further the career exploration process.

In arranging situational assessments in work sites, educators should also keep in mind that guidelines have been developed by the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education for the purpose of placing students in unpaid job

sites while meeting the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act. In brief, the guidelines state that participation in unpaid work sites must be for vocational exploration, assessment, or training in a community-based work site under the supervision of public school personnel. Community-based placements must be clearly defined in the IEP along with a statement of needed transition services established for the purposes of exploration, assessment, training, or cooperative vocational education. For a complete listing of the guidelines, see Inge, Simon, Halloran, and Moon (1993) or Simon, Cobb, Norman, and Bourexis (1994).

Situational Assessment in Community Settings. Situational assessments can also be conducted in recreation sites, community sites (e.g. uses a bank facility), and simulated or real sites that require independent living skills (e.g., home economics lab, family home).

> For example, a student participates in an after-school soccer team. The teacher observes the student's interactions with teammates and the coach. Also noted is the student's interest in the game and ability to follow directions. The teacher, student, and family can explore additional recreation opportunities in the community based on these initial assessment data.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Situational Assessment. The advantages of using situational assessment as an integral part of transition assessment is that individuals are exposed to actual work or community environments, can participate in real or simulated tasks related to work and the community, and are able to interact with peers and adults with and without disabilities. It can also be used to motivate individuals to explore a range of interests in vocational, work, community, and leisure settings. Practitioners can document strengths and needs across settings and use the information in the transition planning process. Practitioners should also note that situational assessments are time consuming and require coordination with school personnel, community personnel, employers, and family members. Most important, situational assessment must be well planned and include systematic recording of behavior that is used to plan further situational assessments or make recommendations for placement and support in a number of settings.

Summary of Methods of Gathering Information on the Individual

The preceding sections have identified a number of methods of gathering information about the individual to be used in the transition planning process. The best way to determine which methods would be useful to you is to determine the questions you need to answer regarding the student and the information you need to answer these questions. You, in cooperation with the student and others on the planning team, can then choose the methods that can provide the information you need. The portfolio approach presented earlier in this chapter offers an ideal vehicle for the student, family, and other members of the transition planning team to select and compile the most relevant transition assessment information

that has been collected. This transition assessment portfolio can then be used in making the match between the student's needs, interests, and preferences and the future environments in which the student will function as an adult.

METHODS OF ASSESSING POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS

The first section of this chapter presented information on a number of methods for gathering information on the student. To make a match between the student's strengths and interests and future environments, however, you also need to have information on the demands of the living, working, and educational environments in which the student will be functioning as an adult and the educational programs in which the student will enroll on the way to adulthood. Analysis of these environments also entails examining circumstances and situations that occur within these environments.

In order to determine the education and support the student will need to succeed in the future living, working, and educational environments he or she has identified, it is critical that you or someone in your program systematically look at the demands of these environments. This process can range from simple to complex, depending upon the environment being studied and the functioning level of the student. In general the lower-functioning the student (or the bigger you feel the gap will be between the student's abilities and the demands of the environment), the more detailed the analysis should be. This will allow you to identify the needed education and supports that the student will need to succeed. It is important to remember that the environment, situations, and circumstances can be adapted, adjusted, or realigned so that minimal supports will be needed. The following section presents basic information on analyzing community settings, jobs, and postsecondary training programs.

Analysis of Community Environments

The concept of environmental analysis, particularly related to community-based living settings, was first introduced by professionals working with individuals with severe disabilities. In terms of future living environments, it is important to identify the demands of both the home environment in which the individual will be living and the immediate and broader community in which the individual will be shopping, banking, and pursuing leisure activities.

McDonnell, Wilcox, and Hardman (1991) indicated that you must determine (a) where the individual will perform the activity, (b) what tasks he or she will complete at each site, (c) how the individual will complete difficult steps of the activity, and (d) what level of performance will be expected in order to terminate the training program. If the specific community-based environments are known, the task becomes one of analyzing the demands of these specific environments (e.g., the apartment, the grocery store, the

bank). Often, however, we do not know the specific location in which the individual will live. In addition, the individual will want to frequent a number of locations within a given community, such as a number of different restaurants. For this reason McDonnell and colleagues recommended a "general case procedures" analysis in which you identify the variations in performance demands across all of the settings in which the individual will be expected to complete each activity. There are six steps in performing such a general case analysis. The steps will need to be outlined in much more detail for individuals with more severe disabilities than for those with mild disabilities. We will use the example of using an ATM card to make a cash withdrawal at an ATM machine.

1. Define the environments in which the individual will be expected to perform the activity, the tasks the individual will complete at the sites, when the individual will be expected to use the settings, and how the individual will meet the performance demands of the activity. (Identify the types of ATM machines in the community, when the individual might use them, and whether the individual will use the machine alone or with assistance.)
2. Identify the sequence of generic response steps required to complete the activity. (List the basic steps the individual must perform in using a typical ATM machine.)
3. Identify generic environment cues for each response in the activity. (Identify the prompts given by a typical ATM machine for each step identified in item 2.)
4. Record variation in the generic environmental cues across performance sites. (List the variations in the prompts that are given by the different types of ATM machines in the community.)
5. Record variation in the generic responses of the activity. (List the variations in the responses the individual must make to the different types of ATM machines in the community.)
6. Identify exceptions in the performance universe. (Identify ATM machines in the community in which there are major differences in the prompts given by the machine or the steps the individual must follow. Decide whether it is important for the individual to learn to deal with these exceptions.)

A sample form for completing an analysis of the community environment is provided in Appendix B. For more information on completing an analysis of community environments, consult McDonnell and colleagues (1991) or Moon, Inge, Wehman, Brooke, and Barcus (1990).

Job Analysis

The process of analyzing the demands of working environments is called *job analysis*. In essence, it is a task analysis of the job and of the demands of the job. This process involves systematically gathering information on what the worker does and how the work is done. This includes other areas

such as amount of supervision, production requirements, and so forth. Information should also be gathered on other demands of the workplace, including activities during breaks and transportation to and from work. The job analysis process is time consuming and must be done on site to observe the "essential functions" of the job, as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act. McDonnell and colleagues (1991) have identified five basic steps in conducting a job analysis. We will use the example of a dental assistant.

1. Identify the specific responses that will be required to complete each job assigned. These responses should be both observable and measurable. (Identify the basic tasks that the dental assistant must complete. Be very specific. Identify the tasks you have observed and other tasks completed at a time you weren't observing.)
2. Identify the environmental cues that will control the completion of the task. These will be cues to tell the individual to perform certain tasks or certain parts of the task. (Identify the commands of the dentist, the requests of the patient, and the requests of other office staff that prompt the specific tasks.)
3. Identify the speed requirements of the job in terms of average time required to complete a response or task or number of products to be completed within a given time period. Identify how important this speed requirement is to the employer. (Identify how quickly the dental assistant must respond to the requests of the dentist, patient, and other staff. Indicate how important speed is.)
4. Specify the quality requirements for each job task. The accuracy of the supervisor's expectations should be cross-checked by discussing them with coworkers who perform the same job. (Identify what criteria will be used to evaluate the quality of the dental assistant's performance.)
5. Identify exceptions to the normal routine. These exceptions may include changes in the job routine or unpredictable situations that may arise during the course of the workday. (Identify tasks the dental assistant does not perform daily, but that are important to completion of the job.)

A sample job analysis form is provided in Appendix C. It is important for you to identify the types of information you want to gather on a job and adopt, adapt, or develop a job analysis form that will provide this information for you. The form should allow you to record information on a specific job and then refer to this information at a later date. The form should also be one that all staff members can use and that will allow the results of a specific job analysis to be shared with other staff and the individual.

Analysis of Postsecondary Education Environments

If one of the goals of the student is postsecondary education, you, the student, and/or the family should visit the targeted educational program to determine the demands of specific courses and of the total educational

environment. This involves gathering information on the specific courses in which the student will be enrolled and determining the demands of these courses in terms of daily assignments, amount of reading required, major tests, and the like. Information should also be gathered on the requirements of any field experiences or laboratories related to the class. In addition, you should identify the support services and accommodations that are available.

Information should be gathered on the following aspects of the program: (a) application procedures; (b) admission procedures; (c) support services and willingness of individual faculty members to provide accommodations; (d) career/personal counseling services; (e) training programs, both academically and vocationally related; (f) existing fee structure; and (g) availability of financial support. A sample program analysis form is provided in Appendix D. As with the job analysis form, it is important for you to identify the types of information you want to gather on postsecondary programs and adopt, adapt, or develop a program analysis form that will provide this information for you. The form should allow you to record information on a specific program and then refer to this information at a later date. The form should also be one that all staff members can use and that will allow the results of a specific program analysis to be shared with other staff and the individual.

Analyzing Secondary Education Programs. An analysis of the future living, working, and educational environments the individual has chosen will be a major help in determining the instruction he or she will need to succeed in these programs. This education could involve enrollment in regular education courses in high school, participating in work experiences in the community, instruction in learning strategies or study skills, or instruction in self-determination. If the instruction involves enrolling in general education classes such as vocational education classes, math classes, or English courses, it will be helpful to conduct an analysis of the demands of these instructional environments so that you can determine the support the student will need in order to learn from these programs. The steps involved in this program analysis are identical to those discussed in analyzing postsecondary educational environments, although most of the programs being analyzed will be in the high school.

SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of methods you can use to collect assessment data throughout the transition planning process. There are a number of methods that can provide information on the individual in terms of needs, preferences and interests, past experiences, and future plans. Each of these methods provides different types of information. It is important to determine (a) the questions that need to be answered and (b) the information you need to answer these questions. You should then select the methods that do the best job of providing this information.

Selection of the specific methods used in the assessment process should also be aligned with the specific goals, interests, and preferences of the student. If a student chooses not to participate in a specific aspect of the assessment, this choice should be honored. The reason for the student's decision should also be noted.

It is also important to gather information on the demands of the living, working, and educational environments the individual has identified. Information related to these areas should include the demands of these environments and the supports (both natural and more formal) that are available for the individual within these environments. Information should also be gathered on the demands of secondary-level instructional programs that will be needed to prepare the individual for these future environments.

Once information has been gathered related to the individual and the future living, working, and educational environments, it is critical to combine this information to determine the best match between the individual and future environments and the support the individual will need to succeed in these environments. It is also important to continually update this information. Chapter 7 presents information that will help you, the student, and the family make this match.

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This position paper presents the life skills approach and indicates why this approach is important for all students. The authors also discuss where life skills should be taught and who is responsible for this instruction. The authors conclude with the statement that a clear commitment to a life skills approach in both general and special education is a vehicle for achieving both appropriate curriculum and inclusive education.

Dalke, C., & Howard, D. (1995). *Life works: A transition program for high school students.* East Moline, IL: LinguiSystems.

Book One is designed to increase self-knowledge and includes worksheets of various assessment categories such as interests and learning style preferences. Book Two is designed to increase knowledge of post-high-school options and includes assessment activities related to exploring occupational options, financial needs, educational opportunities, and transition goals. The package includes a teacher's manual and both books.

Order from:

LinguiSystems, Inc.
P. O. Box 747
3100 4th Avenue
East Moline, IL 61244-0747
(800) 776-4332

DiLeo, D. (1994). *Developing individual service plans for persons with disabilities.* (2nd ed.). St. Augustine, FL: Training Resource Network.

The book includes values upon which service plans are based, assessment of life goals, developing personal profiles, writing plans using measurable objectives, and facilitating and following up personal futures plans.

Order from:

Training Resource Network
P. O. Box 439
St. Augustine, FL 32085-0439
(904) 823-9800

Hagner, D., & DiLeo, D. (1993). *Working together: Workplace culture, supported employment and persons with disabilities.* Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.

Assessment is subsumed in the various chapters that address rationale and methods for building natural supports for persons with disabilities in their places of work. The chapter on career planning is founded on assessment questions and activities that include transition planning.

Order from:

Brookline Books
P. O., Box 1046
Cambridge, MA 02238-1046
(617) 868-0360

Lazear, D. (1994). *Multiple intelligence approaches to assessment: Solving the assessment conundrum.* Tucson, AZ: Zephyr Press.

This book explains multiple intelligence theory as a new paradigm of assessment and describes Howard Gardner's "Seven Ways of Knowing." It contains several assessment activities and forms based on the seven intelligence categories: visual-spatial, logical-mathematical, body-kinesthetic, musical-rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and verbal-linguistic.

Order from:

Zephyr Press
P. O. Box 66006
Tucson, AZ 85728-6006
(520) 322-5090

The Occupational Outlook Handbook: ISBN 0-942784-38-3.

Order from:

JIST Works, Inc.
720 North Park Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3431
(317) 264-3720

Materials available from:

Rehabilitation Resource
Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute
Menonomie, WI 54751-0790
(715) 232-1342

Dictionary of occupational titles

The revised handbook for analyzing jobs

The enhanced guide for occupational exploration

Using the Dictionary of Occupational Titles in career decision-making: A self-study manual

Work sample manual format

Vocational evaluation systems and software: A consumers guide

Report writing in evaluation and assessment

Gathering information for evaluation planning

Vocational evaluation for the traumatic brain injured

Glossary of terminology for vocational assessment, evaluation and work adjustment

7

Making the Match

This chapter presents assessment as an ongoing process with the goal of gathering information on the individual; on potential living, working, and educational environments; and on using this information to make the best match possible between the individual and future adult environments. By this process practitioners should be able to assist the students in reaching transition goals that are included in their individualized education programs (IEPs).

The goals of this chapter are to

- Outline a process for making the best match between the individual's strengths, interests, needs, and preferences and future living, working, and educational environments.
- Identify the questions that need to be asked in the transition process.
- Describe the process for developing an assessment plan.

OVERVIEW OF THE TRANSITION ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Table 7-1 presents the three major components of the transition assessment process. Each of these components should be carried out in full cooperation with the individual, the family, and other members of the planning team.

1. Identify the individual's strengths, interests, preferences, and needs through a variety of assessment methods and techniques. This process should be carried out using the methods and techniques presented in Chapter 6.
2. Identify and analyze potential living, working, and educational environments to determine the demands of these environments and the supports available in the environment. This can be done through analysis of the immediate living environment (including analysis of the surrounding community), job analysis, and program analysis. This step should also include an analysis of formal and natural supports that are available in these environments. An example of a formal support service might be assistance in

reading tests or study skills instruction offered through the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities at a college or university. An example of a natural support would be a coworker assisting an individual with severe disabilities in getting to the work station, to and from the restroom, and to and from the break room. Again, these techniques are presented in Chapter 6. Whether you are analyzing future living, working, or educational environments, you must consider the social/personal relationships present in the immediate environment and in the surrounding environment.

3. Compare the information on the individual's strengths, needs, interests, and preferences with the demands of the environment to determine the best match for an individual relating to employment, postsecondary education, independent living, community involvement, and social/personal relationships. A necessary part of this process is to identify the formal and natural supports the individual will need to succeed in this environment, along with accommodations (including assistive technology) that are needed to facilitate the match. It is also important to identify the instruction the individual will need in order to function effectively in the targeted living, working, or educational environment.

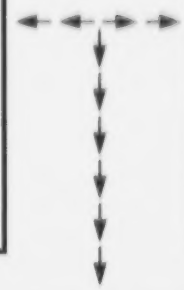
   In making the match you will take one of three routes with the individual and other planning team members. If there appears to be a good match between the individual and the target environment, make the placement and monitor the progress of the individual. If a match is possible, but not definite, identify the natural and formal supports the individual will need to succeed in the future living, working, or educational environment. Also identify the accommodations that will need to be made in the workplace, the living environment, or the educational program. It may be, too, that the individual will need more instruction either *before* being placed in the environment or *after* being placed in the environment. Finally, if the feeling of the team is that there is not a good match even with supports, accommodations, or instruction, it will be necessary to continue to collect information on the strengths, needs, interests, and preferences of the individual and the demands of other living, working, and educational environments. This information should be collected as quickly as possible, and the matching process should be initiated again. The following case study illustrates this matching process.

Case Study

Rosa is a junior in high school. At her IEP meeting, which was held in the fall, she indicated that she would like to be a graphic artist. Her parents supported this goal, but neither they nor Rosa knew exactly what training would be needed or what the job would demand. The IEP team (including Rosa and her parents) designed an assessment plan to assist Rosa in gathering the information she would need on her strengths, needs, interests, and preferences. This plan also indicated the information that would need to be gathered on the job of graphic artist, postsecondary education programs, and residential options available with these programs.

TABLE 7-1
Making the Match

Methods for Assessing Individuals	*Methods for Analyzing the Environment*
Analysis of Background Information Interviews Psychometric Tests Work Samples Curriculum-Based Assessment Behavioral Observation Situational Assessment	Analysis of Living Environment Job Analysis Program Analysis Analysis of Resources in Target Environment



Is There a Match?	
(Document by comparing data on individual and environment.)	
Yes	Make placement and monitor.
Possibly	Identify supports needed. Identify accommodations needed. Identify instruction needed.
No	Continue to collect data on other environments. Continue to collect data on the individual. Initiate matching process again.

In order to gather information on herself, Rosa asked the team to compile information from her previous records and to interview her art teacher and her parents. She also asked that someone observe her in her art class and review a portfolio of her artwork that she had been putting together since junior high school. In addition, she spent 2 days participating in the graphic arts class at the local community college.

To gather information on the demands of the job, Rosa interviewed three graphic artists in town and spent a day shadowing each worker. She also consulted the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* to read the tasks included under the graphic artist occupation. Rosa decided that she wanted to attend a community college in the southern part of the state, so she could live away from home. She and her parents visited the graphic arts program at this college. They also talked with the director of services for individuals with disabilities to determine the support services that would be available to assist Rosa with the reading demands of the classes. They also asked about the "natural" support other students might be willing to give Rosa if she had questions or needed help in taking notes.

In addition to gathering information on the instructional program, Rosa and her parents visited the apartments right off the campus where most of the students who were not commuters lived. They identified the skills Rosa would need to live by herself or with a roommate in these apartments.

The IEP team was called together at the end of the first semester to share the information they had gathered on Rosa and on the job of graphic artist, the instructional program, and the apartment in which Rosa would be living. They decided that there would be a match between Rosa's strengths, interests, and preferences and the future environments she had identified. Rosa decided that she could succeed in the graphic arts program, but that she would have to use the support services provided by the college and her future classmates. She also decided that she needed to work hard on developing the daily living skills she would need to live on her own, such as balancing a checkbook, budgeting, cooking, and maintaining her apartment. She indicated that she would need to work more on developing friendships in new situations and asked that her teachers give her some techniques to develop new friendships.

QUESTIONS THAT NEED TO BE ASKED

The questions that need to be asked as a critical part of the transition planning and implementation process relate to living, working, and educational environments. In particular, they relate to the roles the individual will play in these environments: (a) employment, (b) participating in postsecondary education, (c) community involvement, (d) experiencing satisfactory personal/social relationships, and (e) living independently.

Asking and Answering Questions

Sample questions that might be asked as part of the transition planning and assessment process are presented in Table 7-2. They are organized by the five areas listed above. It is important to stress that these are not *all* of

TABLE 7-2
Sample Questions for Transition Planning and Assessment

EMPLOYMENT Assessment Questions to Ask	*Methods to Collect Information*
1. Does the individual have a realistic career and/or employment goal?	Interest Inventory Interviews • Consumer • Family Background Review • Career Plan/Portfolio • Transition Goals on IEP • Vocational Assessment Records
2. What does the individual like to do?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • School Personnel Situational Assessment • In-School Jobs • Vocational Courses • Community-Based Jobs Work Samples Interest Inventory Aptitude Testing Worker Preference Inventory
3. What types of employment options (e.g., supported employment, competitive employment) are feasible for the individual?	Situational Assessment • Observation in School-Based and Community-Based Jobs Sites Background Review • Previous Vocational Experiences Interviews • Consumer • Family • Vocational Teachers • Work Study Teachers
4. What types of accommodations will the individual need on employment sites?	Assistive Technology Assessment Learning Style Inventories Interviews • Consumer • Family • Vocational Teachers • Work Study Teachers • Employers Situational Assessment • Observation in Vocational Courses • Observation in Community-Based Job Sites

TABLE 7-2 (continued)

EMPLOYMENT Assessment Questions to Ask	*Methods to Collect Information*
5. Does the student relate skills/interests to jobs?	Interview • Consumer Functional Academics Background Review
6. What types of skills does the individual need to acquire/learn to meet the career goal?	Postsecondary Program Analysis Job Analysis Vocational Program Analysis
7. What types of financial security issues (e.g., SSI payments, food stamps, housing subsidies) need to be considered when planning for employment?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Case Manager • Teacher Background Review • Medical Review
8. What types of job benefits does the individual need to become an independent member of society?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Case Manager • Teacher Background Review
9. Does the individual have job-seeking skills (filling out applications, interviewing skills, finding positions)?	Situational Assessment • Social/Interview Skills Interviews • Consumer • School Personnel Observation at Simulated Work Site Functional Academics Background Review • Career Plan • Portfolio
10. Does the individual need assistance from an adult service provider (e.g., rehabilitation, developmental disabilities, JTPA) to find and maintain a job?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • School Personnel Observation at In-School and Community-Based Work Sites

TABLE 7-2 (continued)

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION Assessment Questions to Ask	*Methods to Collect Information*
1. Does the individual want or need postsecondary education or training programs?	Situational Assessments to Observe Workers in Areas of Stated Interest Interviews • Consumer • Family Background Review Interest Inventories
2. What subject(s)/major is the individual interested in studying to prepare for employment?	Interviews • Consumer • Family Tours/Interviews of Community Colleges Interest Inventories
3. Can the individual express his or her need for support services and accommodations if needed?	Interview • Consumer Situational Assessment • In-School and Community-Based Sites
4. What type of accommodations will the individual need in a postsecondary setting?	Interviews • Consumer • Teachers Functional Academics Assessment of Study Skills and Time Management Skills Background Review
5. Does the individual need assistance in selecting an institution and/or filing applications/financial aid forms?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • School Personnel Background Review Functional Academics Simulated Application Package
6. Does the individual need assistance from an adult agency to attend a postsecondary institution?	Interviews • Consumer • Family Background Review • Medical Records • Psychological • Financial Status

TABLE 7-2 (continued)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT Assessment Questions to Ask	*Methods to Collect Information*
1. What public transportation is the individual able to use in the community?	Situational Assessment • Public Transporation Interviews • Consumer • Family • Teachers Community Survey (What's Available)
2. Does the individual have a driver's license?	Interviews • Consumer • Family Record Review
3. Does the individual need special travel arrangements made on an ongoing basis?	Interviews • Family • Teachers Situational Assessments
4. What leisure/community activities does the individual enjoy?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Peers • Teachers Situational Assessment • Physical Education Classes • Community Recreation Services • Extracurricular Activities

TABLE 7-2 (continued)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT Assessment Questions to Ask	*Methods to Collect Information*
5. What accommodations does the individual need to participate in leisure activities?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Peers • Teachers Situational Assessment • Physical Education Classes • Community Recreation Services • Extracurricular Activities
6. Does the individual know how to find leisure and recreation services in the community?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Teachers Situational Assessment
7. Can the individual locate/use community services, such as stores, banks, medical facilities?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Teachers Situational Assessment
8. Does the individual participate in the political process (e.g., voting)?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Teachers Situational Assessment
9. Is the individual knowledgeable about the law? Does the individual observe the law?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Teachers Situational Assessment Record Review

TABLE 7-2 (continued)

PERSONAL/SOCIAL Assessment Questions to Ask	*Methods to Collect Information*
1. Does the individual interact with and have support from family members?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • School Personnel Background Review Observation at IEP Meetings
2. Does the individual have a network of age-appropriate friends?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • School Personnel • Peers Observation in Classroom, at Lunchtime, Extracurricular Activities, Employment Sites, Community Sites
3. How does the individual act in social situations?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • School Personnel • Peers Observation in Classroom, at Lunchtime, Extracurricular Activities, Employment Sites, Community Sites
4. Does the individual demonstrate an understanding of his or her rights as a person with a disability?	Interview • Consumer Situational Assessment • Community • Employment Role Plays in Classroom
5. Is the individual able to advocate for himself or herself in employment, leisure, and community situations?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • School Personnel Situational Assessments Role Plays in Classroom
6. Does the individual participate in the IEP planning process (e.g., statement of preferences, development of short- and long-range goals)?	Observation at IEP Meeting Observation in Vocational Assessment Situations Role Plays in Classroom

TABLE 7-2 (continued)

PERSONAL/SOCIAL Assessment Questions to Ask	*Methods to Collect Information*
7. Does the individual understand and express his or her strengths and needs/accommodations?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • School Personnel Observation at IEP Meetings Classroom Role Plays
8. Does the individual need ongoing advocacy support from guardians/teachers/adult service providers?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • School Personnel Situational Assessments Observations • Employment Sites • IEP Meetings • Classroom

INDEPENDENT LIVING Assessment Questions to Ask	*Methods to Collect Information*
1. Is the individual aware of how to find independent living quarters?	Interviews • Consumer • Family Functional Academics Background Review
2. Is the individual able to purchase and prepare food?	Functional Academics Interviews • Consumer • Family Observations • Home Economics Class • Grocery Store • Food Service Class • Home
3. Does the individual know how to arrange for utility services?	Observation in Simulated Class Activity Functional Academics Observation of Social/Self-Determination Skills

TABLE 7-2 (continued)

INDEPENDENT LIVING Assessment Questions to Ask	*Methods to Collect Information*
4. Can the individual follow daily routines (e.g., get up in the morning, do dishes, clean)?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Teachers • Employers Observation in Home/Independent Living Situation
5. Does the individual maintain personal and hygiene skills (e.g., select and care for clothes, shower, etc.)?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Teachers • Employers Observation in School, Work, Environment
6. Does the individual know how to maintain a checking and savings account?	Functional Academics Interviews • Consumer • Family Simulated Class Activities Observation in Community at Bank Facility
7. Can the individual manage money appropriately for his or her level of income?	Interviews • Consumer • Family Simulated Class Activities • Budgets Observation in Community • Banks • Shopping
8. What types of accommodations/supports does the individual need to function in an independent living situation?	Interviews • Consumer • Family • Teachers Situational Assessments • Home • Community • School • Public Transportation

the questions that should be asked and that the same questions should not be asked of all students. The specific questions that should be addressed in the transition planning process should be triggered by the future living, working, and educational environments that the individual and his or her family have identified, and by the personal/social relationships desired by the individual and family.

Some of the questions will remain constant over the transition planning process, but the responses should become more specific. Other questions will arise, however, as the individual progresses through school. Early in the transition process the interests and preferences of the individual will probably be broad, and the possible future living, working, and educational environments may also be broad. As the transition planning progresses, however, the student's interests and preferences should become more focused, and the future environments identified should be much more specific. It is important, however, to begin asking these questions in the beginning stages of the transition process, so the student, family, and other team members begin to focus on the future and the specific skills the individual will need to function effectively as an adult.

Overview of Available Methods

Chapter 6 presented an overview of methods for collecting assessment data on the individual throughout the transition planning process: (a) analysis of background information, (b) interviews, (c) psychometric tests, (d) work samples, (e) curriculum-based assessment techniques, (f) behavioral observation, and (g) situational assessment. Each of these methods provides different types of information. It is important to determine the questions that need to be asked and the information you need to answer these questions. You should then, in cooperation with the individual, select the methods that do the best job of providing this information. The methods most often cited in Table 7-2 do not require expensive assessment systems. They do, however, require that you or others observe the individual directly in the programs and environments in which he or she is or will be functioning.

In addition to methods that can be used to gather information on the individual, Chapter 6 discussed methods that can be used to gather information on the demands of the future living, working, and educational environments identified by the individual through the transition planning process. Information related to these areas should include the demands of these environments and the supports (both formal and natural) that are available for the individual within these environments. Information should also be gathered on the personal/social relationships involved in each of these environments. In addition, information should be gathered on the demands of secondary-level instructional programs that will be needed to prepare the individual for these future environments.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER—DEVELOPING AN ASSESSMENT PLAN

Chapter 6 provided an overview of methods that can be used to assess the individual and analyze potential living, working, and educational environments or situations in which the individual may function as an adult. An obvious challenge is deciding which methods are appropriate at different stages of transition planning and for different individuals. We suggest that the practitioners develop an assessment plan with the student and the family. This plan can be updated yearly (for IEP meetings) or as the need arises (e.g., if a student's work placement is not appropriate). The following questions can be used to develop an assessment plan.

1. What do I know about this student that would be helpful in developing the assessment plan?

First, review background information on the student. This includes experiences the student has had, information from previous assessments, medical considerations, previous work history, and the like. Second, conduct interviews with the student and family to determine their interests and preferences concerning assessment activities and postsecondary outcomes. Third, interview other personnel who have been involved with the student concerning the student's needs, interests, and preferences.

2. What do I need to know about this student to determine postsecondary goals?

It is important to find out whether the individual has identified environments in which he or she would like to live and work. It is also important to determine whether the individual plans to pursue further education. Table 7-2 provides a list of sample assessment questions related to employment, postsecondary education, community involvement, independent living, and social/personal outcomes. If the individual has identified future environments, these questions can be used to find out more about the individual's goals. If the individual cannot identify any future plans at this time, these questions can be used to assist in developing these plans.

3. What methods will provide the information to answer these questions?

Table 7-2 also identifies methods that can be used to answer the sample questions. Work with the student and the family to identify several assessment activities in which the student will participate over the next few months. These could include exploring job sites and collecting situational assessment results, visiting postsecondary programs to obtain information about a certain career major, or completing an interest inventory.

4. How will the assessment data be collected and used in the IEP process?

Chapter 3 presents information on using the outcomes of the assessment process for IEP planning. It is critical to identify who is responsible for setting up and conducting the assessment activities that have been identified. Assessment data must be collected in a systematic manner and presented in a format that can be used easily by the student, the family, and other team members at the IEP meeting.

SUMMARY

This chapter has presented a model for collecting assessment data to be used in the transition planning process and integrated into the IEP. The process has three components:

1. Identify the individual's strengths, interests, preferences, and needs through a variety of assessment methods and techniques. This process should be carried out using the methods and techniques presented in Chapter 6.
2. Identify and analyze potential living, working, and educational environments to determine the demands of the environment and the formal and natural supports available. This can be done through analysis of the future living environment (including the surrounding community), job analysis, and program analysis. This step should also include an analysis of formal and natural supports that are available in these environments. Again, these techniques are presented in Chapter 6.
3. Use this information to determine the best match for an individual regarding decisions concerning employment, postsecondary education, independent living, community involvement, and social/personal relationships. A necessary part of this process is to identify the formal and natural supports the individual will need to succeed in this environment, along with accommodations (including assistive technology) that are needed to facilitate the match. It is also important to identify the instruction the individual will need in order to function effectively in the targeted living, working, or educational environment.

The chapter also discussed the importance of identifying the information that is needed on both the future environments and the individual in order to make the match. The specific questions that need to be answered should come from the potential living, working, and educational environments the individual has identified. However, a list of sample questions and possible methods for beginning to answer these questions was provided.

Finally, the chapter proposed the use of a simple assessment plan to organize the questions that need to be asked, the methods for gathering the information, how and when this information will be gathered, and how the information will be summarized for use in the IEP and other components of the transition planning process.

Appendices

A. Commercially Available Tests/Assessment Procedures

B. Sample Community Assessment Form

C. Sample Job Analysis Form

D. Sample Vocational Training Analysis Form

E. Sample Program Inventory

A. COMMERCIALLY AVAILABLE TESTS/ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

	Employment	Further Education/ Training	Leisure Activities	Daily Living	Community Participation	Health	Self-Determination	Communication	Interpersonal Relationships
Achievement									
Adult Basic Learning Examination		X						X	
Brigance Inventory of Essential Skills		X						X	
Iowa Test of Basic Skills		X						X	
Peabody Individual Achievement Test		X						X	
Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery		X						X	
Adaptive Behavior									
AAMR Adaptive Behavior Scales	X			X	X			X	X
Adaptive Behavior Inventory	X	X		X	X			X	X
Normative Adaptive Behavior Checklist	X		X	X	X			X	X
Scales of Independent Behavior	X		X	X	X			X	X
Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale	X			X	X			X	X
Street Survival Skills Questionnaire				X	X	X			
Aptitude									
APTICOM Program	X	X							
Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery	X	X							
Differential Aptitude Test	X	X							
General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB)	X	X							
JEVS Work Sample System	X								
McCarron-Dial Evaluation System	X								
MESA	X								
Micro-TOWER System	X								
Occupational Aptitude and Interest Scale-2	X	X							
Talent Assessment Program	X								
TOWER System	X								
Communication									
Communicative Abilities in Daily Living								X	
Woodcock Reading Mastery Test								X	
Individual Reading Placement Inventory								X	
Test of Written Language								X	
Functional Capacity									
Functional Assessment Profile	X			X			X	X	X
General Health Questionnaire						X			
Life Functioning Index	X	X		X				X	
Personal Capacities Questionnaire	X			X			X	X	X
Independent Living Behavior Checklist				X	X				
Learning Styles									
Learning Style Inventory	X							X	
Learning Styles and Strategies	X							X	
Manual Dexterity									
Crawford Small Parts Dexterity Test	X								
Minnesota Rate of Manipulation Test	X								
Pennsylvania Bi-Manual Worksample	X								
Purdue Pegboard	X								

Note. From "Transition Planning Assessment for Secondary-Level Students with Learning Disabilities," by G. M. Clark, 1996, *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 29*(1), pp. 91–92. Copyright 1996 by PRO-ED. Reprinted with permission.

	Employment	Further Education/ Training	Leisure Activities	Daily Living	Community Participation	Health	Self-Determination	Communication	Interpersonal Relationships
Occupational Interest									
California Occupational Preference Survey	X								
Career Assessment Inventory	X								
Career Decision Maker	X								
Career Maturity Inventory	X								
Edwards Personal Preference Schedule	X								
Minnesota Importance Questionnaire	X								
Occupational Aptitude and Interest Scale	X								
Pictorial California Occupational Preference Survey	X								
Reading-Free Interest Inventory	X								
Self Directed Search	X								
Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory	X								
USES Interest Check List	X								
USES Interest Inventory	X								
Wisconsin Career Information System	X								
Personality/Social Skills									
Adult Personality Inventory									X
Analysis of Coping Style									X
Basic Personality Inventory									X
California Personality Inventory									X
Clinical Analysis Questionnaire									X
Differential Personality Questionnaire									X
Katz Adjustment Scale									X
Parent Adolescent Communication Scale									X
Personality Factor Questionnaire									X
Psychological Screening Inventory									X
Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale									X
Tennessee Self-Concept Scale									X
Work Personality Profile	X								X
Work Values Inventory	X								X
Prevocational/Employability									
Brigance Employability Skills Inventory	X								
Job Readiness Scale	X								
Preliminary Diagnostic Questionnaire	X								
Social and Prevocational Information Battery	X			X	X	X			
Vocational Diagnosis and Assessment of Residual Employability	X								
Vocational Behavior Checklist	X								
Transition/Community Adjustment									
Brigance Life Skills Inventory				X	X	X		X	
Enderle-Severson Transition Scale	X	X	X	X	X				X
LCCE Knowledge and Performance Battery	X		X	X	X	X			X
Social and Prevocational Information Battery	X			X	X	X			
Tests for Everyday Living	X			X	X	X			
Transition Behavior Scale	X			X	X				X
Transition Planning Inventory	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Quality of Life Questionnaire							X		X
Quality of Student Life Questionnaire							X		X

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B. COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Dates of Assessment _____ **Compiled by** _____

Identification Information

A. Name _____

B. Address _____

_____

C. Community _____

Information on Local Businesses/Employment Opportunities

List examples of businesses within a 1-mile radius of the student's home.

List examples of businesses within a 5-mile radius of the student's home.

List examples of entry-level job openings advertised in local newspapers.

List other sources of job leads available in this community (e.g., job boards in shopping centers or supermarkets, Department of Economic and Employment Development offices, radio or television bulletin boards).

Note. From Moon, M. S., & Chesak, R. (1993). *Community assessment.* Unpublished manuscript. College Park: University of Maryland.

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

Transportation Information

What type of transportation is available to the student from his or her home?

A. Public Transportation
(If public transportation is available, please attach appropriate schedule.)

Bus YES NO Line number _____

Subway YES NO Line number _____

Light Rail YES NO Line number _____

B. Specialized Transportation

Specialized Public Bus YES NO

How does the student access the service? _____

_____

_____

Specialized Public Van YES NO

How does the student access the service? _____

_____

_____

C. Taxi Service YES NO

List taxi companies and telephone numbers:

Company	Telephone Number
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

D. Other Transportation Services

List other transportation services and how they are accessed (e.g., voucher programs for taxis, vans, or car pool services through the Department of Aging):

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Community Resources

What community resources are available in the student's community?

A. Recreational Resources
List organizations and recreational services available in the student's community.

B. Religious Resources
List organizations and religious services available in the student's community.

C. Consumer Resources
List organizations and services available to consumers in the student's community.

Human Resources

A. Service Agencies

Public Service Agencies. List the federal, state, or local agencies that provide service in the student's community (e.g., Department of Health, Social Services).

Private Service Agencies. List the private agencies that provide service in the student's community (e.g., Catholic or Jewish Charities, Red Cross).

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

Adult Service Resources

A. Employment Training Resources

Public Service Agencies. List the federal, state, or local agencies that provide employment training in the student's community (e.g., Department of Economic & Employment Development, Division of Rehabilitation Services).

Private Service Agencies. List the private agencies that provide employment training in the student's community (e.g., Association for Retarded Citizens, Catholic Charities).

B. Residential Services

Public Service Agencies. List the federal state, or local agencies that provide residential services in the student's community (e.g., Department of Social Services, Department of Housing).

Private Service Agencies. List the private agencies that provide residential services in the student's community (e.g., Association for Retarded Citizens, Jewish Charities, Y.M.C.A.).

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

C. Day Programming and Sheltered Employment Services

Public Service Agencies. List the federal, state, or local agencies that provide day programming and sheltered employment in the student's community (e.g., Division of Rehabilitation Services).

Private Service Agencies. List the private agencies that provide day programming and sheltered employment in the student's community (e.g., Association for Retarded Citizens, Centers for the Handicapped).

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

C. JOB ANALYSIS

Date _____

Interviewer _____

Company/Organization _____

_____

_____

Address Telephone Number

Person Interviewed _____
Name, Title

Job Discussed _____
Title

_____
Wages Benefits

_____
Opportunities for Advancement

Is a written job description available? ____ no ____ yes (include a copy)

Description of essential functions of the job*:

_____

_____

_____

Description of secondary or marginal functions:

_____

_____

_____

* Essential functions of the job—Title I, The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Adapted from Moon, S., Goodall, P., Barcus, M., & Brooke, V. (Eds.). (1986). *The supported work model of competitive employment for citizens with severe handicaps: A guide for job trainers (rev.ed.).* Richmond, Virginia: Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center.

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

Reading/numerical abilities required in relation to essential functions of the job:

_____

_____

_____

Specific machinery/equipment that must be operated in relation to essential functions of the job:

_____

_____

_____

Important aspects of position, in relation to essential functions of the job:

_____ speed vs. _____ thoroughness

_____ teamwork vs. _____ independence

_____ judgment vs. _____ routine tasks

_____ repetitiousness vs. _____ variability

Number of employees in this position: _____

Supervision available (approximate % of time): _____

Works with coworkers (approximate % of time): _____

Absolute "don'ts" in this position (e.g., behaviors, manager's pet peeves, reasons for dismissal):

_____

_____

_____

YOUR OBSERVATIONS

Appearance of employees (dress code, demeanor, etc.):

_____

_____

_____

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

Describe (or diagram) the work area, including size, layout, physical barriers, obvious physical demands of workplace (use back if necessary):

_____

_____

_____

Atmosphere	_____ friendly, cheerful	vs.	_____ aloof, indifferent
	_____ busy, relaxed	vs.	_____ busy, tense
	_____ slow, relaxed	vs.	_____ slow, tense
	_____ structured, orderly	vs.	_____ unstructured
	_____ other:_____		

Other comments/conclusions:

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

D. VOCATIONAL TRAINING ANALYSIS

Part 1: CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

Before you complete the vocational training analysis, visit the guidance department or identify a person in the school who can assist you in obtaining the following information.

1. Describe the career and technology programs at this school (vocational-technical education, career/technology, tech-prep, school-to-careers). Attach a brochure or other program material available. Have the programs' (names and/or content) changed substantially in the past 2–3 years?

2. Describe the type of school these programs are offered in: technology center, vocational high school, 2 years at high school and then 2 years at community college.

3. In what grade(s) do students typically enroll in these programs?

4. How do students in this school system find out about these programs?

5. Do students receive any type of support services while enrolled in these programs if they require assistance?

6. Other comments/points of interest:

Note. From Smith, F. (1985). *Vocational training analysis.* Unpublished manuscript. Fairfax, VA: Fairfax County Public Schools. Adapted by Neubert (1995).

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

Part II: ANALYSIS OF VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

DATE _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

Program Name _____

School _____ Instructor _____

Program Length _____

Telephone Number _____ Best Times to Call _____

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

List the major objectives of your program (you can attach a copy of the course syllabus or objectives if available from the instructor).

Do students learn a "code" in your program (e.g., an electrician's or plumber's "Code") or must they pass a state examination at the end of their training (e.g., cosmetology state board)?

Describe the safety rules and tests that must be followed and passed for entrance into your program.

PREREQUISITE SKILLS

Describe the types of prerequisite skills that the instructor would like students to have as they enter the vocational program.

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EDUCATIONAL SKILLS

Math: _____ Adding/Subtraction _____ Multiplying/Dividing
_____ Fractions _____ Decimals
_____ Other (Describe.) _____

Reading: Estimate grade level _____

What grade level reading is required for the textbook you use?

_____ Must be able to read study sheets or tests.
_____ Must be able to take notes.
_____ Must be able to write papers.

Describe any modifications the instructor is willing to make.

BEHAVIORAL SKILLS (Check those that are critical.)

_____ Following directions
_____ Coming to class prepared
_____ Working independently
_____ Working in groups
_____ Paying attention
_____ Other (Please list.) _____

PHYSICAL SKILLS (Check those that are critical.)

_____ Walking
_____ Lifting number of pounds _____
_____ Kneeling
_____ Crouching
_____ Finger dexterity
_____ Other (Describe.) _____
_____ Eye-hand coordination
_____ Form perception
_____ Color discrimination
_____ Spatial perception

*Note any modifications instructor is willing to make.

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INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Describe the teaching methods you use, including materials (audiovisuals, worksheets, hands-on activities) and structure (small groups, lecture, discussion).

What kinds of assignments do students have to complete in this program? (e.g., worksheets, papers, computations, demonstration/laboratory projects).

Describe the ways students are tested:

_____ Oral

_____ Demonstration

_____ Written tests

_____ Blueprints

_____ Other (Describe.) _____

Note any modifications the instructor is willing to make.

What percentage of time do students spend in

Classroom with theory? _____%

Shop with hands-on activities? _____%

The community on class "jobs"? _____%

Work experience? _____%

Other (Please list comments.) _____

SUPPORT SERVICES

What support services are available to students with special needs (students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds or students with disabilities)? Describe any such services, including the availability of vocational support service teams, resource teachers, etc.

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Are there are any additional support services (or cooperative efforts) that you think are needed for students with special needs to be successful in your program?

_____ No

_____ Yes (Please describe.) _____

What types of jobs do students tend to get after exiting this program? Are there specific postsecondary programs some students transition to?

Is there a person at this school designated to help career and technology students find employment? (If yes, describe.)

In your opinion, is this career and technology instructor willing to work with students with disabilities? Explain. What would you change (in the curriculum, competencies, collaboration strategies) to facilitate students with disabilities in entering and completing this program?

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E. PROGRAM INVENTORY

Program Title _____ Instructor _____

Text Title/Author _____ Reading Level _____

Information Input/Output Used in This Program

Indicate the frequency of the methods listed below: 1 = Used Daily 2 = Used Occasionally 3 = Never Used

Information Input
(Instructional Methods)

Information Sources
_____ Textbook
_____ Worksheets
_____ Lecture
_____ Discussion
_____ Video
_____ Overhead Transparencies
_____ Slides
_____ Audio Tapes
_____ Concrete Experience
Other: _____

Structure of Instruction
_____ Directed
_____ Independent
_____ Peer Tutor
_____ 1:1 Adult
_____ Small Group
_____ Large Group/Class
Other: _____

Information Output
(Types of Assignments)

Test Format
_____ Short Answer
_____ Essay
_____ Multiple Choice
_____ True/False
_____ Matching
_____ Computation
_____ Word Problem/Math
_____ Demonstration
_____ Verbal
Other: _____
_____

Assignments
_____ Worksheets
_____ Short Papers
_____ Term Paper
_____ Demonstration
_____ Laboratory Work
_____ Oral Reports
_____ Group Discussions
_____ Computation
_____ Word Problems/Math
_____ Maps, Charts, Graphs
_____ Blueprints/Schematic
Other: _____

Grading Criteria _____
_____
_____
_____

Extra Credit _____
_____
_____

Exit-Level Skills _____
_____
_____
_____

Homework Policy _____
_____
_____
_____

Make-Up Policy _____
_____
_____

Attendance Policy _____
_____
_____

Note. Adapted from Albright, L., & Cobb, R. B. (1988). *Assessment of students with handicaps in vocational education: A curriculum-based approach. Module #1: Establishing a curriculum-based vocational assessment process.* Alexandria, VA: American Vocational Association.

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

Other program requirements: Put a check next to the highest priority requirements for this program.

Academic and Behavioral Skills Needed

(Entry-Level skills)

_____ Becoming interested
_____ Paying attention to the spoken word
_____ Paying attention to the printed word
_____ Following directions
_____ Organization (keeping track of materials, assignments)
_____ Staying on task
_____ Working in groups
_____ Working independently
_____ Learning to listen
_____ Verbal expression
_____ Reading textbooks
_____ Reading study sheets or tests
_____ Understanding what is read
_____ Writing legibly
_____ Written expression
_____ Spelling
_____ Seeing relationships
_____ Understanding cause and effect
_____ Anticipating consequences
_____ Drawing conclusions/making inferences
_____ Systematic problem solving
_____ Remembering
_____ Note taking
_____ Outlining
_____ Independent research
_____ Measuring
_____ Keyboarding
_____ Punctuality
_____ Coming to class prepared
_____ Staying seated
_____ Understanding/following safety rules
_____ Asking questions/for help when needed
_____ Responding to supervision

Additional Prerequisites _____

_____

_____

_____

Instructional Support

_____ Special education teacher present
_____ Classroom aide
_____ Advance organizer
_____ Alternative testing option
_____ Taped textbook
_____ Assistive technology

Other Instructional Support _____

_____

_____

_____

Other Program Rules _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Additional Comments _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Date Compiled _____

By _____

Note. From *Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment* by Patricia L. Sitlington, Debra A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte, 1996, Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children. Permission is granted to reproduce this page.

CEC Teacher Resources

Integrating Transition Planning into the IEP Process
by Lynda L. West, Stephanie Corbey, Arden Boyer-Stephens, Bonnie Jones, Robert J. Miller, Mickey Sarkees-Wircenski
Shows how to incorporate transition planning into the IEP process. Helps students become self-advocates. Describes skills needed for employment, community living, postsecondary education, and leisure activities. Includes three sample IEPs.

No. P386. 1992. 78 pp. ISBN 0-86586-222-2
Regular Price $15.70 CEC Member Price $11.00

Crossover Children: A Sourcebook for Helping Children Who Are Gifted and Learning Disabled, Second Edition
by Marlene Bireley
A rich resource that provides specific strategies to help children who are gifted and learning disabled and/or ADD control impulsivity, increase attention, enhance memory, improve social skills, and develop a positive self-concept. It also provides recommendations for academic interventions and enrichment activities.

No. P5121. 1995. 94 pp. ISBN 0-86586-264-8
Regular Price $28.00 CEC Member Price $19.60

Back Off, Cool Down, Try Again: Teaching Students How to Control Aggressive Behavior
by Sylvia Rockwell
A vividly descriptive primer on how to nurture the social development of students with aggressive behavior in a classroom setting using the stages of group development as the basis for classroom management. The focus moves from teacher control to control through peer interaction. Strategies for group management, affective and academic instruction, and planning, documentation, and consultation are presented.

No. P5120. 1995. 144 pp. ISBN 0-86586-263-X
Regular Price $27.00 CEC Member Price $19.00

Tough to Reach, Tough to Teach: Students with Behavior Problems
by Sylvia Rockwell
Through the use of anecdotes, the author prepares teachers for the shock of abusive language and hostile behavior in the classroom. This book will allow you to have a plan for meeting the challenges of teaching these students more effective ways to communicate. Provides many practical manage~ment strategies for defusing and redirecting disruptive behavior.

No. P387. 1993. 106 pp. ISBN 0-86586-235-4
Regular Price $22.00 CEC Member Price $15.40

Survival Guide for the First-Year Special Education Teacher, Revised Edition
by Mary Kemper Cohen, Maureen Gale, and Joyce M. Meyer
Tips for new teachers to start you off on the right foot. Tells how to get organized, how to get to know the students, how to get along with co-workers and parents, and how to take care of yourself.

No. P335R. 1994. 48 pp. ISBN 0-86586-256-7
Regular Price $12.00 CEC Member Price $8.40

Assess for Success: Handbook on Transition Assessment
by Patricia L. Sitlington, Deborah A. Neubert, Wynne Begun, Richard C. Lombard, and Pamela J. Leconte
Helps the IEP team decide what to assess and how assessment data should be collected and used within the context of career development. Case studies illustrate how this concept applies to students with different levels of ability and different career visions. Provides strategies for assessing self-determination skills.

No. P5155. 1996. 136 pp. ISBN 0-86586-281-8
Regular Price $30.00 CEC Member Price $21.00

Prices may change without notice.
Send orders to: The Council for Exceptional Children, Dept. K60650, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191-1589. 1-800-CEC-READ.

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